N FUND.

MAP OF

RÂN & EASTERN JAULÂN

from the Surveys of

TAV SCHUMACHER, C.E.

duced from the One inch Scale

by GEO. ARMSTRONG, for the

OF THE PALESTINE EXPLORATIO

Scale – $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch to a Mile.

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ACROSS THE JORDAN:

BEING

AN EXPLORATION AND SURVEY OF PART OF HAURAN AND JAULAN.

BY

GOTTLIEB SCHUMACHER, C.E.

WITH ADDITIONS BY

LAURENCE OLIPHANT AND GUY LE STRANGE.

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MAP OF WESTERN HAURÂN & EASTERN JAULAN (PART OF)

from the Surveys of

GUSTAV SCHUMACHER, C.E.

Reduced from the One inch Scale

by GEO. ARMSTRONG, for the

COMMITTEE OF THE PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND.

Scale – $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch to a Mile.



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PREFACE.

THE circumstances which made the following work possible are these :

About a year ago a firman was granted giving leave to survey the district lying between Damacus and Haifa, with a view to the construction of a railway. The *concessionnaires* appointed as their surveyor for the portion of country east of the Jordan Herr Gottlieb Schumacher, that part lying between Haifa and the River having been already surveyed by the officers of this Society for their great Map of Western Palestine. In the course of his work Herr Schumacher found it necessary, as well as possible, to make many scientific observations, notes, maps, and drawings which he afterwards embodied in the memoir which forms the greater part of this volume. The Map, a reduction of which is here published, covers an area of 240 square miles, partly in the Hauran,

partly in the Jaulan, a district never before surveyed, and very seldom crossed by the traveller. With the view of giving a more permanent form to the already published papers by Mr. Laurence Oliphant and Mr Guy le Strange on their own travels in trans-Jordanic country, they are incorporated with the volume. The best thanks of the Society are due to Mr. Guy le Strange for the trouble he has taken in editing the volume. Herr Schumacher sent home his memoir, written in English, which naturally required, here and there, the change of an idiom. Mr. Le Strange has also provided the Index. The beautiful and careful illustrations which enrich this volume, have all been specially made from Herr Schumacher's own drawings and plans. They will be found in no way inferior to those drawn for the Memoirs of the Survey by the officers who executed that great work. They are not only drawn and engraved for this work, but they are also, for the most part, entirely new, representing ruins and sites never before sketched or surveyed.

Herr Schumacher has been enabled to survey for the Society another portion of the country, the maps and memoirs of which are expected very shortly.

It is necessary to add, and to insist strongly, that in this, *as in every other publication of the Society, all identifications, theories, and speculations belong to the writer and must not be considered or criticized as the work of the Society.* The Palestine Exploration Fund advances as its own work, newly discovered facts, in the shape of maps, plans, sketches, observations, inscriptions, etc., but is in no way responsible for any conclusions which may be drawn from them, either by the explorer or by his readers.

W. B.

1, ADAM STREET, ADELPHI,
November 20, 1885.

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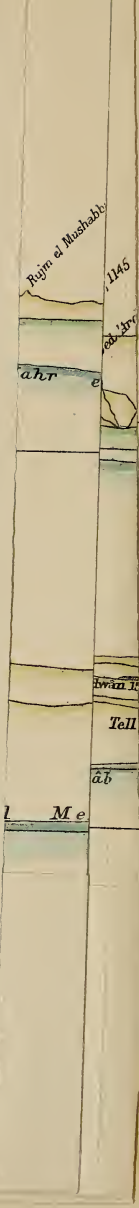
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EASTERN JAULÂN AND WESTERN HAURÂN.

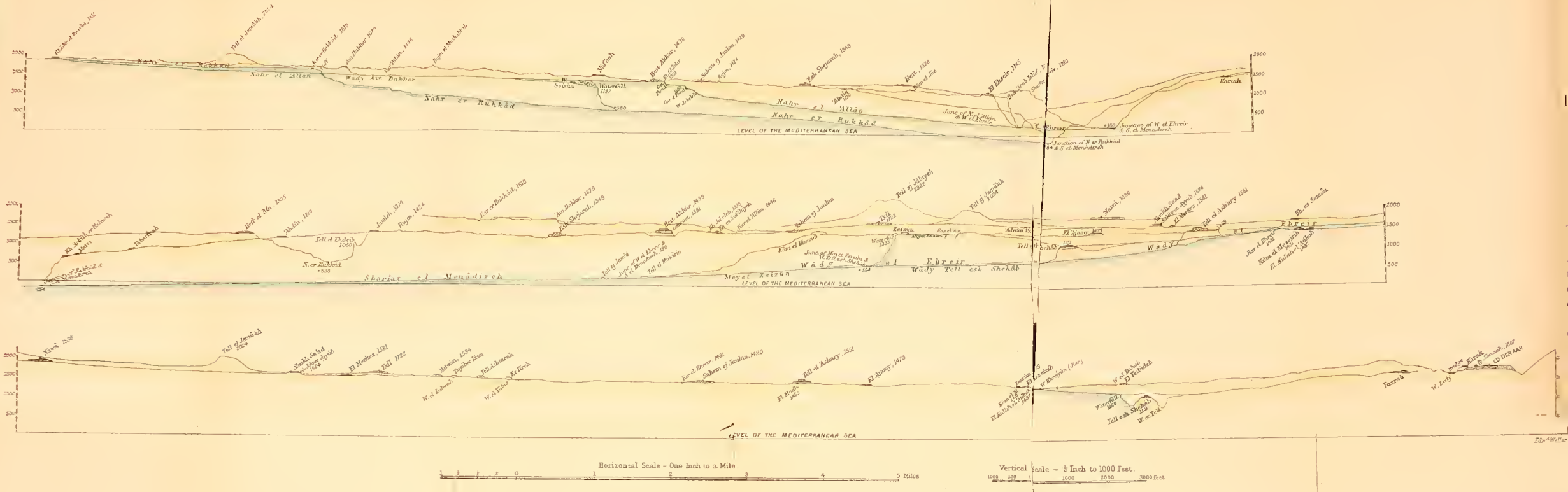
CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

THE present map (on the scale of $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch to 1 mile) represents a portion of *Eastern Jaulân* or *Ez Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh* and *Western Haurân*, and contains about 240 square miles. The whole of this country consists of a high plateau. It is bounded on the south-west by the hills of 'Ajlûn, and on the south by the Syrian Desert. In its extension from east to west it gradually slopes from the Jebel ed Drûs down to the western banks of the high table-lands of Jaulân, which overhang the eastern shore of the Lake of Tiberias; but it rises gradually from its southern to its northern limits, where occur the

SECTIONS ACROSS JAULÁN AND HAURÁN.

The Altitudes are expressed in English Feet, {+ above / − below} the level of the Mediterranean Sea.



range of volcanic hills generally called Tellûl el Hesh, and the high lands of Jedûr.

The country shown in the map forms a part of the *Liwah*, the *Mutasarrifîyeh* or the *Sanjak* of the *Haurân*, whose Lieutenant-Governor or Mutasarrif resides at *Sheikh Sa'ad*. His jurisdiction, besides comprising the entire Haurân plateau, extends over the Jebel ed Drûs, 'Ajlûn, and the Jaulân; and his district is divided into several *Kaimakâmîyehs*, of which one is the Kamakâmîyeh of the Jaulân, with the seat of its government at *El Kuneitrah*. The Jaulân is further subdivided into three districts; viz.: (1) the northern part round El Kuneitrah, called *Esh Sharah;* (2) the southern and western part, *Ez Zawîyeh el Ghurbîyeh;* and (3) the eastern part, *Ez Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh*.

The natural boundary, as also the political division recognised by the present government, between Haurân and Jaulân is the *Nahr el 'Allân;* the boundary between Jaulân and 'Ajlûn is formed by the *Sharî'at el Menâdireh* (the ancient Hieromax or Yarmûk); while that between the Haurân and 'Ajlûn is the *Wâdy esh Shelâleh*. That portion of the Liwah of Haurân which is now surveyed is naturally divided into the two districts of (1) *Eastern Jaulân* or *Ez Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh*, and (2) *Western Haurân*.

1. *Eastern Jaulân or Ez Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh.*

This district of Jaulân is bounded on the south by the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, and on the north extends to the *Jisrs* (or Bridges) of *'Allân* and *Rukkâd*, or even as far as *Ghadîr el Bustân*. On the east it is bounded by the gorge of the Nahr el 'Allân (Haurân), and on the west by the still more precipitous Nahr er Rukkâd. Its highest elevation, at *Ghadîr el Bustân*, reaches 1,912 feet; while its lowest inhabited village, not counting the Bedawin huts at Kuweyyeh, is *El Ekseir*, at 1,145 feet; but its average height may be put at 1,500 feet above the Mediterranean Sea. This high plateau is in its northern part (from Jamleh northwards) but little cultivated, except in the vicinity of the villages. It is covered with a multitude of volcanic mounds—the so-called Rujm, of basaltic formation—the summits of which, fenced round by basalt blocks, are used for sheepfolds, and termed Sîar by the Bedawin, who graze their flocks over this stony country, which produces a splendid pasture during the earlier spring. The appearance of these Sîar from a distance is likely to lead to the false impression that the country is covered with ruins. Each of the tribes of the 'Arab el 'Anazeh, the Fuddel, and the Nu'êm, who occupy this part of Jaulân, have their respective Sîar or Isiar (folds), which they consider as their own, and return to

every successive spring; and should the Sîar be forcibly annexed by another tribe, such an action is regarded as a challenge, and a dispute becomes unavoidable. The Sîar are generally known by the name of the tribe they belong to. This northern region of volcanic mounds is called *Ej Jebâl.**

The southern part of Eastern Jaulân, southwards from Jamleh, and east, west, and south from Esh Shejarah, is also of a basaltic formation, but bears a richer soil, being less stony, and is therefore more cultivated. The small tribe of 'Arab Izlûf cultivates wheat and barley in the vicinity of the prosperous town of Esh Shejarah. The 'Arab el Menâdireh camp in the valley of the ancient Hieromax, the Yarmûk River, or as it is now called, the Sharî'at el Menâdireh. On the high plateau there are but few trees; there are, however, still here and there some remains of forests; and single oaks and terebinths

* Although, as is well known, the letter Jîm (ج) in classical Arabic is not counted as one of the 'Shamsiyeh'—*i.e.*, is not of those before which the *l* of the article *al* is to be assimilated—in the vulgar pronunciation of the Fellahîn of Western Palestine, and more especially among the tribes east of the Jordan, it counts as such; and they always pronounce 'Ej Jebâl' and not 'El Jebâl,' as is the rule in other countries, in accordance with the classical grammar. In the map and memoir, in order as much as possible to set down the exact local pronunciation of the names of places, I have adopted this Fellahîn and ungrammatical usage of Jîm as a "Shamsiyeh," and thus write Sahem ej Jaulân, Tell ej Jâbiyeh, etc.

and stumps are dotted about the country; the slopes of the wâdies, too, are still covered with brushwood. Neither the soil nor the climate here is inferior to that of 'Ajlûn, which is so thickly covered with oak forests; but owing to the great need of fuel during the rainy season, in a country where snowfall is a common occurrence, the nomad Bedawin and the villagers tear up every young tree before it has time to grow. Now and then, however, near villages, in the yard of a sheikh's dwelling, or to shade and shelter the whitewashed tomb of a Muhammedan saint, we find a single butm or terebinth (*Pistacia terebinthia*) tree, which has been spared, and which has grown to a large size. The villagers and Bedawin for their fuel as a rule make use of dried dung. But how highly wood is appreciated for this purpose is attested by the fact that, in order to prevent its removal by lawless hands, the Fellahîn woman who, after great efforts, has gathered some branches together, will pile them up during the summer in the yard surrounding the Wely of the Muhammedan saint who is buried at the village; and here an upright stick, surmounted by a coloured piece of cloth, marks it as hers. Under the protection of the Neby, the property is absolutely secure, for no Muhammedan would dare to touch it; ploughs also and other implements of agriculture are often found deposited near the Neby's grave, and it effec-

tually protects these goods against Bedawin and robbers.

The descents from the mountain plateau to the gorges of the streams, owing to the peculiar basaltic formation, are often precipitous; and perpendicular cliffs of from 20 to 40 and even 60 feet occur. The southern banks of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, forming the northern boundary of 'Ajlûn, are less abrupt than are the northern banks which belong to Jaulân, for the basaltic region comes gradually to an end on the borders of northern 'Ajlûn. The Sharî'ah in fact may be considered as the boundary between the basaltic region of the Jaulân and the limestones of 'Ajlûn. The bottom of the Sharî'ah, as well as of the Rukkâd and 'Allân gorges, consists of a very soft limestone mass, while it is only the upper borders of the gorge, and the banks of streams that are of from 40 to 100 feet in height, that show the solid mass of basaltic blocks; but a more or less large accumulation of fragments of this volcanic stone is piled up on the intermediate slopes. One of the most curious instances of this formation is found at the peak between Jamleh and Kefr el Ma, on the Rukkâd. Here the Tell el Ehdeib, or Râs el Hâl, rises nearly perpendicularly from the valley of the Rukkâd (which is itself 528 feet above the level of the Mediterranean) to an elevation of 1,060 feet above the sea, thus forming a precipitous cliff 522 feet

high. On its southern side, towards Jamleh, however, the Tell falls less abruptly, and after a descent of about 300 feet reaches the valley, through which flows a small brook. Thus at this place the Rukkâd Valley is divided into two halves, between which rises the Tel el Ehdeib, sloping gradually down towards the west, and forming, where the above-mentioned brook unites with the Rukkâd River, a cliff of but little height. On both the upper borders of the valley, which has here between Kefr el Ma and Jamleh a width of a mile and a half, but especially on its northern side, the high plateau is edged with basaltic cliffs, which rise precipitously above the sloping banks of the river. Great masses of basalt, which have fallen from the upper cliffs, here cover many parts of the slope, and have rolled into the bed of the stream, which in its rapid course has sometimes carried them even as far as the Sharî'at el Menâdireh.

The watershed at this part of Jaulân has its culminating point at 'Ain Dakkar, and runs along a line from there to Kaukab, and thence along the eastern part of the *Z*awîyeh esh Shurkîyeh, thus keeping a line not far from and nearly parallel to the 'Allân, and extending southwards to El Ekseir. From this watershed the streams separate, one portion running westwards and south-westwards to the Rukkâd, and another portion southwards to the

Sharî'at el Menâdireh. There are four perennial streams: 1. The *Sharî'at el Menâdireh;* 2. The *Rukkâd;* 3. The *Wâdy Seisûn* or *Wâdy 'Ain Dakkar;* and 4. The *'Allân.* Of these the first two and the last form the boundary of the Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh.

1. The *Sharî'at el Menâdireh* is the most remarkable stream of the country east of the Jordan, and it brings to that river about the same amount of water as the Jordan itself carries at the point of junction. Its name is derived, as above said, from the Bedawin tribe called El Menâdireh—Sharî'ah, شريعة, being the Arabic word for ford or watering-place, etc.—who graze their flocks in its valley and cultivate its slopes. The ancient name, *Hieromax,* is mentioned by Pliny; and Ritter ('Erdkunde,' xv. *a;* 'Palæstina u. Syrien,' ii. *a,* p. 372) states that in the Talmud, according to Lightfoot's researches (Lightfoot, Opp. ii., Centuria Chorogr., chap. iv. fol. 173), it is mentioned by the name of *Jarmoch* ('Jarmoch fluvius in via ad Damascum'). The name *Yarmûk,* used in the twelfth century by Arabic authors, such as Edrisi and Abu'l Feda, must be the transcription of the ancient name Hieromax; while the name *'Irâk,* عراق, occasionally given to it by the inhabitants of Eastern Jaulân, simply means cliff, and is descriptive of the character of the river-banks.

During a meeting of Bedawin and other sheikhs, which took place at the large village of Esh Shejarah

in Eastern Jaulân, I took occasion to inquire about the names in use amongst them for the 'great river' at the boundary of their lands. Their statements were as follows: '*Ehreir*, or '*Irâk*, is the name of the great wâdy rising in Northern Haurân, at a large place called Es Sunamein: it flows nearly due south, passing on its way Sheikh Miskîn, and bends near the Tell es Semen W.S.W. to Tell el Ash'ary, and thence more to the west again until it is joined by the 'Allân below Heit. The two united rivers, bearing the names of El Ehreir or 'Irâk, now flow for a short distance south-west, until they join the Sharî'at el Menâdireh. The Sharî'ah is fed by a second river called the *Moyet Zeizûn*. This stream rises under the name of Wâdy Zeidy (dry in summer) in the Jebel ed Drûs, and passing westwards the Nukrah of the Haurân, touches El Dera'ah, and is joined at Tell esh Shehâb by the Wâdy el Bajjeh, coming from the Bajjeh lake at El Mezeirîb; thence, taking a more northerly course under the name of Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb, below Zeizûn, it is further joined by a large stream, the Moyet Zeizûn, which name is now kept by the united streams until they join the Sharî'ah el Menâdireh, very near the junction of the Ehreir. A third stream, the *Wâdy esh Shelâleh*, the boundary between the Haurân and 'Ajlûn, which carries but little water in summer, also falls into the Sharî'ah just south of the junction

of the Moyet Zeizûn. These three rivers, then, form the head of the great Sharî'at el Menâdireh, which now flows south-west, and is lower down joined by the Rukkâd and several smaller wâdies.'

As I found these statements to be generally correct, as far as I could verify them, in the course of my surveys, I conclude that the name Sharî'at el Menâdireh is applied to that river only from the point of junction of the Wâdies Ehreir, Zeizûn and Shelâleh, and is retained by it to its junction with the Jordan; and further, that the names Ehreir, 'Irâk, and also Yarmûk (a name which the sheikhs gave in connection with Ehreir) are applied solely to the wâdy rising at Es Sunamein, and running down to the Sharî'ah.

This is the present nomenclature, but it may be remarked that the names *Hieromax*, *Yarmûk*, and *Jarmoch* in the old geographers refer to the *whole course of the river from Es Sunamein* (*or at least from Tell el Ash'ary*) *to the Jordan*.

Throughout its course the Sharî'at el Menâdireh is fed by springs, and further by the Nahr er Rukkâd, the Wâdy Keleit, and many streams coming in from the west. There are three tributaries in its upper part: (1) The Wâdy Ku'eilby, coming from Hartah in the 'Ajlûn, but of which the water-supply is small. (2) Further west, the Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn, which rises to the north at a ruin called Khurbet

Hamâtah; this rich spring affords water to the Bedawin herds, and separates near its head into several branches—one of these supplies Jamleh with drinking water, another flows north of the village down into the Rukkâd, while the third takes a southern course to the Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn and the Sharî'ah. (3) The Wâdy Keleit, a large and winding valley coming from 'Ajlûn, and having but little water in summer. The other tributaries are outside the limits of this map. When crossed at its head, the Sharî'at el Menâdireh in August, 1884, was found to be about 120 feet wide and about 3 feet 6 inches deep; while below El Ekseir, where it rushes along with higher speed and forms rapids, it was but 1 foot 8 inches deep, and about 80 feet across. The depth naturally changes considerably, according to the width. It has a maximum at the junction of the Rukkâd and Wâdy Keleit of about 150 feet in width by 3 feet in depth, but at certain seasons increases to double that width, as I observed once during a visit to the Yarmûk in April. The river is fordable without danger at its head, at the junction of the Rukkâd, and between these points, near Kuweyyeh, in several places. The Sharî'ah has from its head (+180 feet) to its junction with the Jordan (− 835 feet) a total fall of 1,015 feet; it winds with great speed through a narrow valley, and sometimes hardly leaves space for the road to pass under the

basaltic precipices between which it is confined. Where the banks, however, are less abrupt, and especially where the valley widens, near Kuweyyeh, the soil is cultivated with much industry by the 'Arab el Menâdireh, who grow barley and wheat on the slopes. They have also planted lemons, vines, pomegranates, and olives near the site of the ancient town Kuweyyeh, and again at the mouth of the Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn. The 'Arab el Menâdireh, however, seem to be limited to the land between the Tell ej Jamîd and the Tell el Hâwy, or between the head of the Sharî'ah and the junction of the Rukkâd. The valley further down the river is occupied by the Fellahîn el Kufarât* of the 'Ajlûn. At many places along the banks the water-power of the Sharî'ah is used for mills. There are several near the mouth of the Wâdy el Ku'eilby, also at the junction of the Rukkâd and Keleit, and still more numerous are they at Mukhayby, and at the hot springs of El Hammy. These mills are of a very primitive character, built of stone and mud; they have generally but one grinding-stone and one opening. As there are no other mills in Jaulân and Haurân but those near the rivers which are worked by water-power, the villagers have often to bring their grain on donkeys from a great distance, along roads which at first sight would seem hardly practicable even for an unloaded animal.

* El Kufarât is the District of the Decapolis.

The slopes of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, where it approaches the high plateau of the 'Ajlûn, become covered with oaks and terebinths (butm), but there is scarcely any wood on the Jaulân side; however, along the immediate banks of the river, the oleander (difleh or dfeileh) blossoms abundantly.

2. *Nahr er Rukkâd.*—This precipitous and rapid river rises in the northern part of Jaulân at the foot of Mount Hermon or Jebel esh Sheikh, a little above the village called 'Ain el Beidah. The first village on its borders, shown on this map, is Ghadîr el Bustân, now ruined, and here the stream is fed by some springs which water all this district during the summer. At this point, at an elevation of 1,912 feet above the sea, the wâdy is small, and continues thus down to the bridge called the lower Jisr er Rukkâd (there is a second one further to the north), where the little stream in September, 1884, was but 6 feet across and scarcely 6 inches deep. Here it winds along in a bed which lies from 16 to 20 feet below the surrounding country, and is already 300 feet lower than Ghadîr el Bustân; 200 yards below this bridge it falls over a perpendicular cliff, about 80 feet in height, and thence continues falling in cascades over basaltic rocks, hemmed in by a narrow, extremely steep, and deep gorge, 100 to 300 feet across, until it is finally joined by the fine stream of the Wâdy Seisûn. The gorge between Kefr el Ma and Jamleh is divided

into two halves by the Tell el Ehdeib (as described above), and widening leaves more room for the rushing river, now swollen by the addition of its important tributary, to a width of over 20 feet, with a depth of 1 foot, its waters swarming with a multitude of fish (trout). The bed of the river in winter, as marked by the white line on the banks and the *débris* of large basaltic blocks, must have a width of over 360 feet, which shows the extent to which the floods must rise in this ravine during the rainy season, and especially during the time of the melting of the snows on Mount Hermon. At these periods the cascades of the Rukkâd must be very fine. At this point, one mile below the junction of its tributary, the Rukkâd is already 1,072 feet below, though only $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles from, the crossing of the Jisr er Rukkâd. This rapid fall, as well as the steepness and narrowness of the gorge, is accounted for by the fact that both the bed of the Rukkâd and a portion of its banks consist of a very soft and crumbling limestone, which is easily worn away under the action of the winter floods. The sides of the river are fringed by fine oleander bushes and thick cane-brake, while the higher slopes of the valley are covered by a sparse growth of brushwood (terebinth or butm). The tributaries of the Rukkâd falling in below the Wâdy Seisûn are of little importance; and it joins the Sharî'at el Menâdireh at

the Tell el Hâwy, which is 154 feet *below* the Mediterranean, 14 miles from, and 2,066 feet below, Ghadîr el Bustân.

3. The one important tributary of the Rukkâd is the *Wâdy Seisûn*. This fine perennial stream rises at 'Ain Dakkar, near the Jisr er Rukkâd. The spring, which gives its name to the village, is built up with ancient masonry, and is fed by several small rivulets which run into it from the north-west. The water of the stream—6 to 8 feet broad, and 1½ to 2 feet deep—is clear and cool, and is the best that I found anywhere in these parts. Near 'Ain Dakkar it turns a couple of mills, the property of the Bedawin sheikh Muhammed es Smeir of the great tribe of the 'Anazeh, and thence flows south-west, winding along in a flat bed through the mountain plateau to Seisûn. Below this its fall increases rapidly until it reaches the upper edge of a cliff, some 6 miles from 'Ain Dakkar, having fallen during its course 482 feet; here it has a perpendicular fall of about 100 feet, and then continuing straight on over 420 yards of cataract, where the fall is 517 feet more, it finally joins the Rukkâd. The difference of altitude between its head-waters and its junction with the latter stream is 1,099 feet, its entire length being a little over 6 miles. The fine waterfall of the Wâdy Seisûn is both audible and visible from a considerable distance. Near its junction with the Rukkâd the stream turns a small

mill belonging to Jamleh (Tâhûnet Jamleh), but the water power would suffice to work a far more extensive establishment.

4. *Nahr el 'Allân.*—The Nahr el 'Allân rises near the foot of Tell el Hârah, at a place called 'Ayyûn es Sakher. Flowing through a stony country covered with volcanic mounds, it is spanned two miles west of Tsîl by the Jisr (Bridge) el 'Allân ; its altitude is here 1,448 feet above the sea, and is therefore 162 feet below the Rukkâd at the Jisr, which lies $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the north-west. The actual bed of the 'Allân at its Jisr is 6 to 8 feet below the level of the surrounding lands : it is a small and sluggish stream of perennial water, and in September, 1884, was barely a yard and a half across. There is a second and far wider bed, 200 to 300 yards across, which is bounded by a range of low and stony volcanic mounds ; this, I was informed, is partly flooded by the 'Allân in the winter and spring at the melting of the snows of the highlands of Jaulân, and thus the streams of the Rukkâd and the 'Allân would both appear to be greatly affected by the amount of snowfall and the change of temperature in the mountainous region of Northern Jaulân and Jedûr. The 'Allân further has a second river coming into it, north of the point shown in this map.

From the Jisr, the 'Allân continues southwards, towards the important ruin of Beit Akkâr, winding

in the narrow channel above described, but here the surrounding country changes. The wider bed, mentioned above, has already disappeared two miles to the north, and the stream itself, fed by some springs, has increased in depth and rapidity. Half a mile north of Beit Akkâr it runs down a cataract of some 20 feet, and works the Tâhûnet el Ghazâleh and two other mills, after which, at an altitude of 1,391 feet above sea, it reaches a perpendicular cliff over 60 feet in height, and over this falls into a round birkeh or pond, which the stream has hollowed for itself in the basaltic rocks. The pool is filled with bright bluish-green water and is teeming with fish. Here the gorge suddenly becomes very steep and narrow, and is joined from the west by a ravine, hemmed in by perpendicular cliffs of basalt, called the Wâdy Beit Akkâr. A little less than half a mile further down, the stream again falls over a cliff of about 60 feet in height, into a second round birkeh of beautiful clear water, which, according to information obtained on the spot, is of considerable depth. This second pond has an altitude of 1,195 feet above the sea. Each of these cataracts is termed El Ghadîr, and where the 'Allân thus continues to cascade over cliffs and rocks, the part, north and south of Beit Akkâr, is known by the name of Tiâh (waterfalls of) Beit Akkâr.

One mile and a half below the first cataract and

about five miles south of the Jisr, the 'Allân is joined from the east by the stream of the Wâdy ej Jebeleh. Also a copious perennial spring, the 'Ain es Sufukîyeh, which rises close to the Wâdy ej Jebeleh, and turns four mills situated on the eastern slopes of the wâdy, joins the latter and comes into the 'Allân, a thick growth of oleanders and cane covering the whole vicinity. The point where the united streams join the 'Allân lies about 190 feet below the pond last mentioned, and about 440 feet below the Jisr. Below this the gorge widens to between 400 and 600 yards, and its banks become less steep. The 'Allân has no further affluents that are worthy of mention, but many nameless springs come purling down its sloping banks, their course being marked by a jungle of cane. The river now winds rapidly through the wâdy, and less than two miles below Heit joins the Ehreir; and thence the united rivers, after flowing nearly 2 miles further south-west, come to their junction with the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, at a point which has an altitude of 180 feet above the sea. The length of the 'Allân from the Jisr to the Sharî'ah is about 12 miles, and its fall during this course is 1,268 feet.

Roads.—The main line of communication through the Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh lies in the north. Coming from the Sea of Galilee and passing through Fîk and Khisfîn, the road crosses the bridge of the Rukkâd,

runs on to 'Ain Dakkar, and from here by the second bridge of the 'Allân, reaches Tsîl and Nawâ. The portion lying between the two bridges is marked by distinct remains of an ancient Roman road. Three hundred yards east of 'Ain Dakkar this Roman road divides, one branch going to the bridges, the other, as far as was followed, leading in a straight line to Sahem ej Jaulân, the probable site of the Roman city of Gaulanitis.

The annexed section (Fig. 1) of the still existing

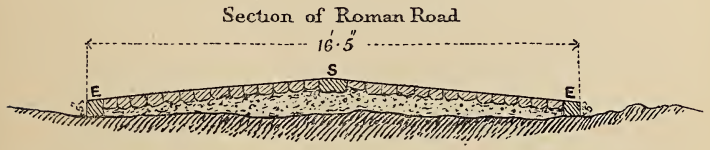


FIG. 1.

causeway will show how the Roman high-road was built. It was 16 feet 5 inches wide, and bordered along the sides by edge stones (E), which raised it about 5 inches above the level of the country. Down the centre of the roadway a line of cut stones (S) was laid, which elevated this part 10 inches above E. Finally, the spaces between E and S, sloping on either side, were paved, without much care, with stones of irregular shape. The road followed at the present time runs parallel and close to the Roman road, and it is only in winter or in muddy places that this latter is ever now made use of. *Paths* are

found leading from Sahem ej Jaulân to Tsîl, and thence to the Jisr el 'Allân and 'Adwân by way of Buruk; one also runs from Nâfa'ah northwards to 'Ain Dakkar, but it is very stony. Others run between the various towns and lead to and from the mills; but they, like all the roads in the Jaulân, are mere tracks, not even being kept clear of stones, and are in consequence most troublesome for beasts of burden.

2. *Western Haurân.*

Western Haurân is merely the further portion of the great upland, and does not form a separate sub-administration, but is governed directly by the Mutasarrif of Haurân. It is bounded on the south by the Wâdy Shelâleh and the Jebel 'Ajlûn; on the west by the Nahr el 'Allân and Jaulân; while its northern limits extend to the Jebel el Aswad, and its eastern to the Lejjah and the Jebel ed Drûs—also called Jebel Haurân. The most conspicuous point on this portion of the map is the Tell ej Jâbiyeh, a hill which rises to a height of 2,322 feet above the Mediterranean Sea; the highest village is Nawâ in the north, with an altitude of 1,886 feet; the lowest is the hamlet of Tell esh Shehâb, situated in the south at the head of a gorge. The geological formation of Haurân is basalt; most of the hills are therefore

of volcanic origin, the borders of the wâdies in consequence being abrupt and steep.

The extreme north-western part of this section of Haurân, round Tsîl, is very similar to the Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh, the country being covered with volcanic mounds, with sheepfolds on their summits, as described on a previous page. As, however, we get further from the 'Allân going east and south, the rock-covered surface disappears, and a stoneless, magnificent, reddish-brown soil takes its place. This soil has been formed by the lava scoria and ashes which were spread over the country during the period of activity of the volcanoes of the Jebel ed Drûs, the Tellûl el Hesh, and others, and which have become disintegrated under atmospheric action. Such ashes I have found still undecomposed 3 to 4 feet below the surface of the earth, and lava fragments at the present moment cover the slopes of the extinct volcanoes. The soil of basaltic regions is, as a rule, very fertile, and the Fellahîn and Bedawin of Haurân have therefore but little trouble in raising magnificent crops, if rain only falls in sufficient abundance; moreover, as the ground is stoneless, the land is easily cultivated.

As this part of Haurân is but thinly settled, a large portion of the rich soil lies uncultivated, for the Fellahîn, as a rule, only cultivate an area round the village not larger than is possible for them to

get to in the day, and to work with a single yoke of oxen—that is, a feddân.* Whatever land lies outside of this circle is left unoccupied, and belongs to the Bedawin herdsmen, and is by them in some parts cultivated.

As Haurân is now better administrated than before, and especially since the seat of the Government has been removed from Busrah eski Shâm to Sheikh Sa'ad (Merkez), where the Governor can more easily be supplied with soldiers from Damascus in case of need, the Fellahîn feel themselves more protected, and begin to risk further settlements; also the Bedawin—namely, of the Wulid 'Ali es Smeir, a branch of the great clan of the 'Arab el 'Anazeh, the only tribe occupying the Western Haurân—have now begun to settle and build stone houses in which they store their grain. A more teeming population would soon follow on this improved state of things, but that the greater security of property has produced an unscrupulous speculation in the grain crops on the part of the Syrian merchants. This has been the ruin of all agricultural improvement in Syria, and already there have been large numbers of victims among the Fellahîn of Haurân. To stop this the Government has only to enforce the exist-

* A Haurân feddân is half the feddân in Western Palestine, which consists of two pairs of oxen. A Haurân feddân is but one pair.

ing laws against usury, and prohibit the feudal tenure of land, thus fostering the emancipation of the Fellahîn; and should this not quickly be done, the independence of the Haurân Fellahîn will soon have come to an end, for all their property will have passed into the hands of these unprincipled speculators.

The cereals cultivated in Haurân consist of an excellent kind of wheat and barley; and careful researches have convinced me that the reports of former travellers, concerning a sixty to eighty fold crop of these, are in no wise exaggerated. On the contrary, in 'the Magazine of Fruits,' in the district of En Nukrah, in Southern Haurân, the yields are said to be still greater. The grain is transported on camels, part to Damascus, part to 'Acca and Haifa, on the seacoast. The price of corn at the place of growth is of course very low, but it rises considerably on account of the slow and troublesome transport. To give an idea of the amount of grain brought from Haurân to 'Acca and Haifa, I may state that, from my own observation, these seaports have exported, as an average of the last twelve years, 100,000 to 120,000 tons of cereals, annually, to the different countries of Europe, especially to France and Italy. The cost of transport of grain from any one of the nearer places in Haurân to the seacoast has to be defrayed by a tax of from one-third to one-half

of the amount of cereals so transported, or at the rate of from thirty-three to fifty per cent. on the value of the grain, and the higher rate is the more usual. As an annual yield of 200,000 to 250,000 tons of grain in the Haurân is considered a fair crop, any system giving a rapid communication between the remoter districts and the seaports would meet a very pressing need. The Turkish Government has lately issued a very liberal firmân, for the construction of a railway line running from Haifa to Damascus through the Haurân, with a probable extension north to Aleppo and 'Aintâb, and foreign capitalists have been invited to invest.

Although there are streams in abundance in Western Haurân, there is no growth of forest. Except, therefore, at Sheikh Sa'ad, where the Government has planted orchards and a few trees, for shade, such as willows and acacias, and at Mezeirîb, Zeizûn, and Tell esh Shehâb, where there is some cultivation of trees, not even round the villages are any to be met with, and the traveller will look in vain for a tree anywhere on the wide plain. The fuel, therefore, consists solely of dried manure. Near villages the Fellahîn have already begun to cultivate a few orchards, and they have vineyards and gardens; the latter are a great resource to travellers who, camping out in the Haurân, have usually to do without such luxuries as fruit and vegetables.

Mention therefore is made of them where they occur. This absence of wood-growth is owing to the grazing herds of the Bedawin, which destroy every growing plant; but in the north above Nawâ, and still more in the south towards 'Ajlûn, the growth of wood increases.

The descents from the plateau into the wâdies are steep and abrupt; the Wâdy Shelâleh, however, is less precipitous than are the Ehreir and the Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb. Willows, oleanders, and cane border the streams and springs. The growth of grass is less abundant in Haurân than in Jaulân; for the sun more quickly dries up the stoneless, sandy plain of the first than the hilly, stony region of the last. Therefore Jaulân is called the grazing country (Belâd er Rabi'ah), while Haurân is the wheat country (Belâd el Kameh).

The northern half of Western Haurân is in form triangular. As the country slopes westwards down to the 'Allân, the streams which rise in the east converge towards Kefr es Samir, or else near the banks of the Wâdy Ehreir flow directly into this last. South of the Ehreir the tract forms a declivity, where the streams, also rising in the east, flow each separately into the Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb or Zeizûn.

There are thirteen perennial streams found in Western Haurân (not counting the Nahr el 'Allân, which has already been described): 1. The *Wâdy el*

Ehreir; 2. The *Wâdy el Bajjeh,* or *Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb;* 3. The *Moyet Zeizûn;* 4. The *Wâdy esh Shefeil;* 5. *Wâdy el Yabis;* 6. *Moyet en Neby Ayyûb;* 7. *Wâdy el Lubwah;* 8. *Wâdy el 'Ajamy;* 9. *Wâdy Bâbis;* 10. *Wâdy Jebeleh;* 11. *El Emshiyadât;* 12. *Wâdy el Emheiris;* 13. The *Wâdy esh Shelâleh.*

1. The *Wâdy el Ehreir,* or *'Irâk,* which is identical with the ancient *Yarmûk* or *Hieromax,* is a fine clear stream, about 25 feet across and 1 foot deep, near the Jisr (bridge), as has already been described above (see 'Sharî'at el Menâdireh'). It rises near Es Sunamein in the north of Haurân, passes the Jisr el Ehreir, from whence, through a gorge, the river flows to Tell el Ash'ary, where it falls over cliffs of considerable height. Near here it turns several mills of primitive construction like those found throughout the Jaulân. Round Tell el Ash'ary the wâdy bears also the name of this village. A quarter of a mile below Tell el Ash'ary it is fed by the fine springs of the Bahret el Ash'ary and el Emshiyadât, and one mile below that village it is joined by the Wâdy el Emheiris. Here it takes the name of Wâdy el 'Ajamy, a name which therefore during its course occurs twice, namely here and at the boggy spring near the village of El 'Ajamy, close to the Ehreir. About five miles below Tell el Ash'ary, the Wâdy el Ehreir is fed by the Wâdy from Kefr es Sâmir, and next by the stream of the Wâdy esh Shefeil, which, how-

ever, is nearly dry in summer. At a distance of about $9\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the Jisr, the Ehreir is joined by the 'Allân, where are two mills, and then it joins the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, having run a distance of a little over 11 miles from the Jisr el Ehreir, and having fallen during this course 1,301 feet. The gorge of the Ehreir down to the Wâdy esh Shefeil is steep and narrow, like that of the 'Allân, the cliffs being composed of basaltic rocks; but below this it widens and becomes a gentle valley. Oleanders and cane-jungle border the stream.

2. The *Wâdy el Bajjeh* has its source at Râs el 'Ain, close to El Mezeirîb. The spring is much built up with ancient masonry and overgrown with a luxuriant jungle of cane. A fine stream of cool, clear sweet water, 2 to 3 yards across and 1 to 2 feet deep, bordered by willows and acacias, flows for about 500 yards west, and then fills a basin; on leaving this it turns the Government mills, in these are three grinding-stones, the whole establishment being modern, and the best of the kind found throughout Haurân and Jaulân. After leaving the mills, it runs into the lake or *Bahret el Bajjeh*, which is the watering-place of the pilgrims on their road from Damascus to Mecca, and is therefore accounted holy. This lake, which is full of fish (carp), including the little island of Kum el Mezeirîb, covered

in September, 1884, an area of 27 acres. This area is greatly extended during the rainy season by the flowing in of the waters of the Wâdy Khreiyân, rising near the Jebel ed Drûs, as well as by numerous springs which bubble up below the surface of the lake and on its shores. Near the Dakkakîn, or Storehouses, of El Mezeirîb, on the northern banks of the lake, there is a partly submerged building called El Hummâm, 'the Bath'; the water here has a slight mineral taste, and a temperature somewhat higher than that of the rest of the lake. The lake itself, I was informed, had at its greatest depth from 16 to 20 feet; but there being no boat I could not myself verify this report. Its shape is that of an oblong, nearly approaching the square; the banks are flat, but become more steep beyond where a circle of basaltic stones encircles the strand: hence the waters lie in what is a depressed plain, and are not visible at a distance. Its altitude above sea is 1,431 feet. The waters of the lake are muddy, owing to the marshy banks and the miry bottom, and they are brackish. Kum el Mezeirîb is a partly ruined village built on a small island in the middle of the lake. Its healthiness is much impaired by the miasma, which causes fever, and it is therefore now nearly entirely abandoned by its former inhabitants.

The shores of the lake are bare of trees, being bordered by marsh-plants only; at its northern

end the land is very marshy, and in consequence the edge of the water is almost unapproachable. From the point where the stream leaves the lake on its western shore it bears the name of Wâdy el Bajjeh, and flowing rapidly, a remarkably bright stream of from 3 to 5 yards across, and 1 to 2 feet in depth, runs in the beginning of its course nearly due west. Along this reach it turns several mills, after which, bearing more to the south-west, it passes under a small modern stone bridge, half a mile north of Tell esh Shehâb. Increasing its speed, it serves to turn some other mills, and then falls, a little to the south of the bridge, over a high cliff, forming a waterfall of greater volume, but equal in height, to that already described as occurring in the Wâdy Seisûn. Its length from the lake to this cliff is $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and its fall 271 feet. The stream all along its course is bordered by willows and brushwood. Before it arrives at the modern bridge, there branch from it canals which irrigate the plain, and, further down, water some of the Tell esh Shehâb gardens, which are an agreeable and unusual sight in this part of the world, being planted with apricots (mishmish), pomegranates, figs, pears, and apples, besides many vineyards. The name of Wâdy el Bajjeh, which it has hitherto borne, is, below the waterfall, changed for that of *Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb* or merely *Wâdy et Tell*.

The stream, which now forms many cataracts, turns—during its course from the bridge on the plain down to the bottom of the gorge below the village of Tell esh Shehâb—not less than thirty-five mills, which go by the name of Tawâhîn et Tell. These mills are all of a most primitive character, and the water-power of the stream could, in this rich part of the country, with the abundant wheat-fields, be utilized in a far higher degree. Through a gorge, which resembles those already described, and shut in by basaltic cliffs, the stream rushes down, and after a course of about 4 miles more joins the Moyet Zeizûn at a total distance from the Lake of el Bajjeh of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and with a fall of 867 feet.

3. The *Moyet Zeizûn* rises three-quarters of a mile south-east of the village of Zeizûn. The springs gushing out of the earth at Râs el 'Ain form a circular pool, a natural birkeh some 30 yards (Sept., 1884) in diameter, the sides of which are thickly covered by cane. From this pool a sluggish stream flows out for a couple of hundred yards, and then forms a second birkeh of like size to the first, which is fed by other springs. The stream, which at first was rather muddy, now flows clear and fast towards the village, its fall increasing, and runs through the centre of the town. It here expands from an initial width of about 12 feet, with a depth of $2\frac{1}{2}$, to a broad stream, called the *Bahret Zeizûn*, here 25 to 35 feet wide and

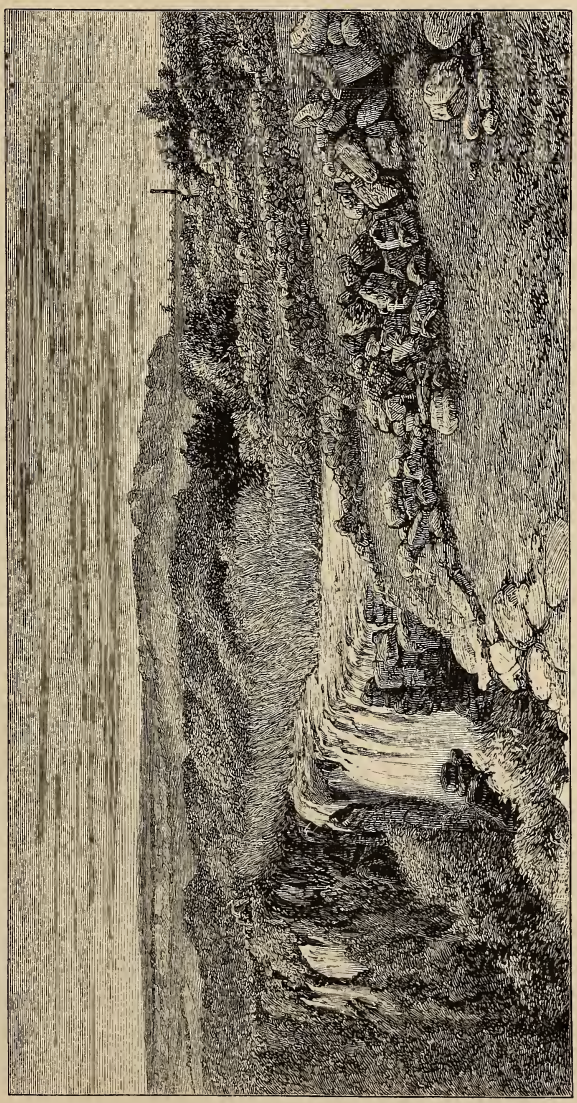


FIG. 2.—Waterfall of Moyet Zeizûn (Haurân), with the village of Zeizûn in the east. From a photograph.

about a foot deep, in the middle of which there stands upright a rectangular obelisk, 19 feet high. Past this the clear stream, rushing over debris and ruins, comes down to a cliff, before reaching which it becomes yet broader, and finally falling perpendicularly over the cliff (Fig. 2), forms cataracts down a height of 771 feet, at the bottom of which it is joined by the Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb. The Râs el 'Ain itself is about 100 feet higher than the top of the cliff, and is 1,435 feet above sea; the whole length of the course of the Wâdy *Z*eizûn down to its junction with the Wâdy et Tell is $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles, and its total fall is about 870 feet.

Throughout this course the Moyet *Z*eizûn is bordered by a thick growth of cane (Kussub, also called Kusseib in Haurân) and shrubs; the steep slopes, down which the water falls in cascades, are also covered by a jungle of cane, below which the waters run, to disappear and appear again at the bottom of the valley. The waters spread out before they fall over the broad cliff, and this waterfall is more imposing in its grandeur than any other found in this country; but I doubt whether in amount of water it surpasses that of the Wâdy el Bajjeh.

On this fine stream, down to its junction with the Wâdy et Tell, there are no mills, and no works of any kind whatever; it is yet waiting for an intelligent hand to put to use its abundant power.

From where it is joined by the Wâdy et Tell, the Wâdy Zeizûn taking a rapid winding course between gentle slopes, skirts the base of a narrow shoulder, above which lies Kum el Kussub, whereby it is divided from the Wâdy el Ehreir. A little south of, and above, the junction of the Ehreir, it joins the Sharî'at el Menâdireh and the Wâdy esh Shelâleh, and turns there the mill Tâhûnet ez Z'abeh. The total length of the Moyet Zeizûn, from Râs el 'Ain to the junction, is something over $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and its total fall about 1,255 feet. The spot where the Sharî'at el Menâdireh commences is remarkable for the highly picturesque aspect which the scenery here presents, and we have a lovely valley, with wooded slopes and numerous cascades.

4. The *Wâdy esh Shefeil* can only during about 5 miles (from the south of Tsîl to a mile south of Sahem ej Jaulân) be considered a perennial stream, for at this point it loses itself in the dry wâdy bed. It rises north of Tsîl, flows in a south-westerly direction to the Tell 'Ameidûn, and from thence to Sahem ej Jaulân, where it waters some gardens. Here it becomes, in autumn, a muddy ditch, running over a flat bottom about 6 feet across, and 5 inches deep. Its course is due south, and then S.S.E. until it flows into the Ehreir, near Yublah.

5. The *Wâdy el Yâbis* is a perennial stream of brackish water, which rises in a marsh, where

springs bubble up round the ruin of Et Tîreh. It is here about 8 feet across, 6 inches deep, and has a sluggish current. It is a dangerous wâdy to cross at this point, from the boggy nature of the bed and the marshes around it. The only safe ford is close to the ruin. Taking a south-western, and then a more western course along a flat bed, bordered by plants of a marshy growth, it reaches the village of Kefr es Sâmir, and here again forms a marsh, which renders the fording troublesome. The small wâdies, El Lubwah and Moyet en Neby Ayyûb, join it here. From this point the stream, bearing the name of *Wâdy Kefr es Sâmir*, increases both in volume and rapidity, and, deepening its channel, which becomes near Yublah a narrow gorge, it rushes down into the Ehreir, its total length being about 8 miles.

6. The *Moyet en Neby Ayyûb* is also called *Moyet esh Sheikh Sa'ad*, as both saints have equal patronage of the stream. Its sources are to be found in the gardens at the foot of the hill of Sakhret Ayyûb, at Sheikh Sa'ad; it supplies the Hummâm Ayyûb and the Jâm'aah fountain of Sheikh Sa'ad with clear, fresh water, and flows through a built canal along the gardens by the village; and thence turning southwards, enters the Merkez, or residence of the Mutasarrif. Along this part of its course rows of willows and acacias have been planted, as well as fruit-trees. The stream is very small, and in its upper

part boggy, being 1 to 2 yards across, and a few inches deep, but it flows more rapidly from the Merkez southwards to Tell 'Ashtarah; and is joined, south of this place, by the 'Ain en Nîleh. A short distance north of Kefr es Sâmir, still a mere brook, it is joined by the Wâdy el Lubwah; and the two streams united, after flowing round Kefr es Sâmir, form a marsh, and finally run into the Wâdy el Yâbis, or Wâdy Kefr es Sâmir.

7. The *Wâdy el Lubwah* rises near Deir el Lubwah at a spring of the same name. Near Taiyibet Lism, a mile to the south-west of the spring, it has much the same appearance as has the Wâdy el Yâbis at Et Tîreh; a boggy bed and a sluggish stream, marked by a growth of marsh shrubs. There must have been a more plentiful supply in ancient times, as there is a ruined mill at Taiyibet Lism, and a second one, a mile and a half further down, which are now known under the name of Tâhûnet el Midyab. In taste the water is brackish; and the general direction of the stream is south-west. As already mentioned, it is joined by the Wâdy or Moyet en Neby Ayyûb, a little north of Kefr es Sâmir, and then runs into the Wâdy el Yâbis.

The whole country along the road from the Merkez to Et Tîreh is marshy, and only in cases of unavoidable necessity should this road be chosen when travelling with loaded animals.

8. The *Wâdy el 'Ajamy* is a perennial stream of dirty, brackish water, which rises at the *Bahret el 'Ajamy*, a swamp which exhales poisonous miasmas and renders the village of El 'Ajamy so unhealthy. Along a winding, sluggish course, bordered by various sorts of marsh-plants, with a muddy bed that is difficult to cross, it is at times 3 yards wide and 8 inches deep, but, in places running more swiftly, is only a yard and a half across and 5 inches deep. It flows in a westerly direction, parallel with the Ehreir, as far as the ruins of J'arah and El 'Amurîyeh. Here again it forms marshes, and, turning southwards, waters, by means of ditches, some of the gardens of *Z*eizûn, and finally between *Z*eizûn and Kum el Kussub rushes down a steep slope into the Moyet *Z*eizûn. It is throughout an unsightly little stream, overgrown by cane.

9. The *Wâdy Bâbîs* rises half a mile south-west of El Mezeirîb, at the spring of Râs el 'Ain. It is a very small stream of water, which takes a westerly course, winding along a wide flat bed through a plain of fine reddish soil. The stream, however, almost dries up before it reaches Tell esh Shehâb. In winter it must swell considerably, for it has formed the northern gorge which surrounds the Tell esh Shehâb.

10. The *Wâdy Jebeleh* has its beginning in the marshy region lying north-east of the ruins of Jebeleh, where there are a number of springs. It is

a small though rapid stream, and falls into the 'Allân after running a course of about a mile.

11. *El Emshiyadât*, and the stream coming out of the Bahret el Ash'ary, are perennial, rapid brooks 2 yards across, 6 inches deep, running with clear water. They both take their rise in the marshy country, near Tell el Ash'ary, and each has a length of a little over a mile. El Emshiyadât turns the Tawâhîn (mills) el Arshediyât, and the other brook, which has no name, the very primitive Tawâhîn el Biariât, both situated on the slopes of the Ehreir. After passing out of the mills, each of the two brooks makes a small waterfall, and then rushes down to the Ehreir.

12. The *Wâdy el Emheiris* rises a little east of the ruin El Emheiris, in a marsh. It is a muddy stream of water, of the size of the Wâdy el Yâbis, and falls, after passing Jillîn, over cliffs down to the Wâdy el Ehreir, having a total length of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

13. *Wâdy esh Shelâleh.*—This is a wide wâdy, carrying a very small stream of water in summer, which is nearly dry at its mouth, and forms the boundary between Haurân and Jebel 'Ajlûn. I have not explored its course, and merely its junction with the Sharî'ah is mapped.

Roads.—Two main roads cross Western Hauran, uniting at Nawâ. The first, as mentioned in the section on Jaulân, comes from Fîk over the Jisrs of the Rukkâd and 'Allân to Tsîl. From there the

road turns north-east, leaving the Tell ej Jemû'ah to the west, and runs on to Nawâ. The latter portion, between Nawâ and the Tell ej Jemû'ah, runs beside the remains of a Roman road, which doubtless is the prolongation of the one already described as running between the two Jisrs.

The second main line of communication in Haurân is the road from Nawâ, due south to Sheikh Sa'ad, (the Merkez), and thence by the Jisr el Ehreir on to El Mezeirîb, Turrah, and Irbid. It thus connects the seat of Government of the Haurân with the 'Ajlûn Kaimakamîyeh of Irbid, which last forms part of the Liwah of Haurân. The portion from Mezeirîb to Turrah is at the same time a section of the great pilgrim road, Darb el Haj, running from Damascus to Mecca. From El Mezeirîb the Haj either take the shorter route by way of Tuffas to Sheikh Miskîn and Es Sunamein, or the safer but slightly longer way by Sheikh Sa'ad, Nawâ, and Es Sunamein, and thence on to Damascus. Both these roads of Haurân are tolerably good, and are much superior to those of Jaulân. As they are not macadamized, they are in the rainy season muddy; but passing as they do through the stoneless plain, during the summer they are for the most part smooth tracks, from 8 to 10 yards wide, and could be used without any alteration during this season by waggons.

Other good roads exist: such as that running between Sheikh Sa'ad and Tsîl by 'Adwân; between Nawâ, Khurbet ej Jebalîyeh and the Jisr el 'Allân; between Sahem ej Jôlân and the Jisr el Ehreir, by Kefr es Sâmir (this is a particularly broad and handsome road); between Tell esh Shehâb and El Mezeirîb (also very broad and level); and between El Mezeirîb and Ed Dera'ah, and thence on to Busrah Eski Shâm.

The route between Nawâ and Irbid is marked by the line of the *telegraph*. At Sheikh Sa'ad the line divides into three branches: one goes due east to the Jebel ed Drûs; the second southwards to Irbid, by El Mezeirîb; and the third northwards to Damascus, by way of Nawâ, from which latter place a fourth line branches to the north-west, to El Kuneitrah. The only telegraph station of Western Haurân is at the Merkez of Sheikh Sa'ad, from whence telegrams can be sent in any European language to all parts of the world *viâ* Damascus.

There are twenty-five villages or inhabited places marked on this map. Of these, the seven villages belonging to Ez *Z*awîyeh esh Shurkîyeh, and one, Kefr el Ma, in the *Z*awîyeh el Ghurbîyeh, are governed by the Kaimakâm of Jaulân, residing at El Kuneitrah. Besides these villages there is the large town of

Sahem ej Jaulân, which, although situated in the Haurân, also forms a part of the Kaimakamîyeh of El Kuneitrah or Jaulân. The sixteen other inhabited villages of the map belong to the Liwah of Sheikh Sa'ad or the Haurân. The residence of the Mutasarrif is at the Court-house, near Sheikh Sa'ad, which, together with the adjoining dwellings of the Government officials, have been but recently built, and the place is called El Merkez (The 'Centre' of Government). The Mutasarrif is under the Governor-General or Vali of Syria, and has jurisdiction over Haurân, Jaulân, and the Jebel 'Ajlûn. Ed Dera'ah forms a Kaimakamîyeh of itself, but dependant on Sheikh Sa'ad.

The total population of the villages met with in Eastern Jaulân amounts to 1,750 souls, while that of Western Haurân, including Ed Dera'ah, is approximately 8,540, giving a sum-total for both districts of 10,290 Muslems. With the exception of some twenty Christian officials at the seat of Government, there are not to be found in this district any non-Muslems. The descriptions of the villages, ruins, springs, and all other objects marked in the map—with the exception of the streams, which have already been described—are now given classed according to the two districts, and arranged in alphabetical order.

CHAPTER II.

VILLAGES, RUINS, AND NAMES MET WITH IN THE DISTRICT OF EZ ZAWÎYEH ESH SHURKÎYEH OR EASTERN JAULÂN.

THE building-stones of the houses found in this district, and of the ruins, are invariably basalt. The number of the population given includes men, women, and grown children.

'Abdîn.—A moderate sized village, built of mud and stone, situated on the summit of the eastern bank of Nahr er Rukkâd; it has thirty-six huts, some trees, and contains a population of about 150 souls. Water is obtained from a spring near by. The land lying round the village is arable and well cultivated.

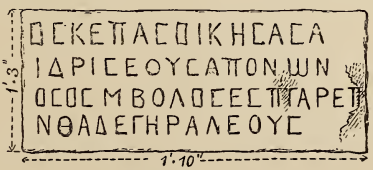
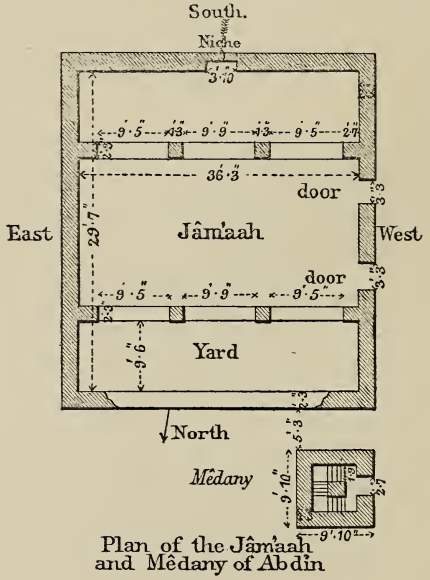


FIG. 3.

A basalt block, with a Greek inscription, is to be seen in the Sheikh's yard (Fig. 3).

In the neighbourhood are several subterranean buildings, roofed with basaltic slabs; the rooms being small, 10 to 15 feet square, and fallen in. To the south of the village are the ruins of a Jâm'aah with a square tower (the Mêdany) standing to the north of it (Fig. 4). The ornamentation of the pillars of the low circular arcades (Fig. 5) is nowise remarkable



Plan of the Jâm'aah and Mêdany of Abdin

FIG. 4.

in appearance, and the stones are sometimes built in upside down. The Jâm'aah cannot therefore be the building for which they were originally intended. The tower, which stands close to the northern side of the building, has the entrance from the west.

In its interior are the remains of winding stairs, the steps of which rest in a solid mullion of rectangular shape; they are not radial. The tower at present is about 12 feet high, and is well built of basaltic stones.

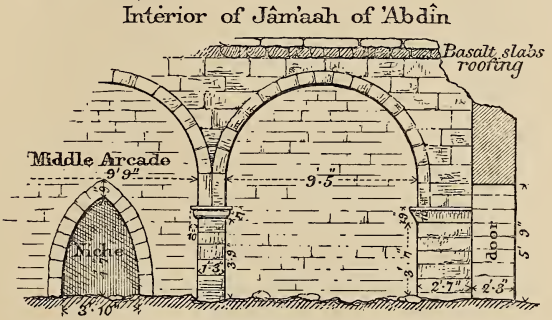


FIG. 5.

Khurbet 'Arkûb er Rahwah.—A ruined and deserted place, situated on the summit of the shoulder which separates the Rukkâd from the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, and above the junction of these rivers (Fig. 6). The ruins are spread all over this shoulder, and are hidden by some Butm (terebinth) trees. There is no ornamentation of any distinct character on the stones. This ruin must have been an important place long ago. The shoulder above mentioned, which bears the name of *Ras 'Arkûb er Rahwah*, and divides the Rukkâd from the Hieromax, in ancient times was probably the political boundary. Khurbet Râs 'Arkûb er Rahwah occupies an advantageous position, and from it is seen the junction

View of 'Arkûb and Râs 'Arkûb or Rahwah of Jaulan, in the distance the wooded slopes of 'Ajlûn



FIG. 6.

of the two rivers, and a great portion of the Jaulân and the slopes of the Decapolis, now known as El Kefarât.

I feel strongly inclined to believe that we have here the site of the ancient *Argob* of the Bible (Deut. iii. 4, 14; 1 Kings iv. 13), which I do not hesitate to place here on the slopes of Bashan, rather than in the Trachonitis or Lejjah, which most authorities have found reason to identify with that country. Burkhardt, in his 'Travels in Syria and the Holy Land,' often declares that the Biblical Country of Argob, which had been hitherto identified with the Batanæa, must rather be sought for in the southern region of Jaulân, although he had himself been unable to discover any such name in those parts. The name 'Arkûb occurs again in the Belkah, but there merely designates the southern slopes of the Wâdy ez Zerkah (Ritter, 'Erdkunde,' vol. xv. *b*, ii. *b*, p. 1040); for the word 'Arkûb (عرقوب) means 'the winding and stony slopes of a mountain,' and is often used in Palestine as the denomination of such places. 'Arkûb er Rahwah, however, of the Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh is the name of an extensive ruin on a hill-slope; and further there can be no objection to its geographical situation, for Jaulân, or Golan, 'is in Bashan,' according to Deut. iv. 43.

The epithet 'er Rahwah' (الرهوة) merely means 'the squeezed in,' a name derived from the situation

of the rocky promontory, which lies 'squeezed in' between the two rivers.

'Arak el Heitaliyeh is a high cliff on the southern borders of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, about three miles below its junction with the Rukkâd; it belongs to Jebel 'Ajlûn, and on it are some ruins of an indistinct character.

Abu Ballûtah.—A single isolated Ballut tree or oak (Quercus ilex) on the high plain, $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of 'Abdîn. It is often used as a rendezvous by those coming from different places, who wish to travel together.

'Ain en Nakhlah.—A perennial spring, near the mouth of the Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn, surrounded by a few mud huts of the 'Arab el Menâdireh, used as grain magazines. The stream waters the gardens containing fig-trees, pomegranates, vines, palms, etc., belonging to the tribe.

'Ain el Ekseir.—A perennial spring lying 100 yards north of the village of El Ekseir. It runs out of a crack in a great basaltic block, and is partly built up with masonry. It is conducted through an open channel of hollowed stones about 12 yards long, now partly ruined and filled with mud, but originally a foot deep and a foot wide and rectangular (Fig. 7). It supplies two sarcophagi, which are used as troughs for watering the herds, and afterwards irrigates some kitchen gardens in the vicinity, and such water as

remains over trickles down the northern slopes of the Sharî'ah el Menâdireh. The sarcophagi above mentioned are of basalt, very much weathered and broken, and each has on its longer side an ornamentation illustrated in Fig. 8, but which is now much defaced. The flow of water is plentiful, but is said to be unhealthy, and causes fever in those who drink it regularly. Above the spring, on the rocks out of which it flows, there is some masonry work having the character of ancient fortifications. Huge blocks of basaltic stones are piled up in a row,



FIG. 7.

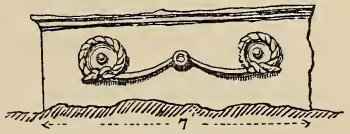


FIG. 8.

forming thus a great wall many yards long and about a yard thick. It would seem to have been built to protect the spring.

'Ain 'Aliyah.—A perennial spring of good supply and excellent water, at the village of Esh Shejarah. It flows round the western part of the village, and irrigates the vegetable gardens.

'Ain Dakkar.—A miserable-looking village of thirty huts, built of stone and mud, and containing about sixty Muhammedans. It is situated on a stony hill, and is the property of the Sheikh Muhammed es Smeir, head sheikh of the Wulid 'Ali es Smeir, a branch of

the great tribe of the 'Anazeh Bedawin, the most numerous of the tribes inhabiting the Haurân. He has settled this place with the 'Aulâd,' or members of his family. There are remains of a rock-built wall round the eastern side of the village, and some further traces of buildings. At the foot of the hill, about 24 feet below the village, towards the east, there breaks from the rocks the *'Ain Dakkar*, a large stream of perennial, clear, cool water, which is superior to any other found throughout this country. The spring is full of fish, and is built up with masonry, and beside it are the ruins of a mill. The brook is fed by springs rising in the north, and after flowing round the southern part of the village, becomes a powerful stream, which turns two mills belonging to the sheikh above mentioned. Further down towards the south-west it forms the remarkable waterfall near Seisûn. Although there is abundance of water, the neighbourhood of 'Ain Dakkar is so extremely stony that there is hardly any cultivation. The inhabitants subsist, as a rule, on the milk of their numerous flocks. A Roman road, beside which runs the modern one, passes to the north of the village, and near it are some ruins. The place must in former times have been of some importance, and the ancient remains scattered around bear traces of a Roman origin.

About 400 yards east of 'Ain Dakkar there are

some ruins of a more distinct character, on either side of the ancient roadway, near the point where this last is joined by another Roman road coming from the south-east. Here, in the midst of ruined buildings, lie seven columns of basalt, which are of a very peculiar shape. The shafts of the columns, which at the present day are considerably weathered, are on an average 4 feet 11 inches long, and cylindrical, 1 foot 6 inches in diameter.

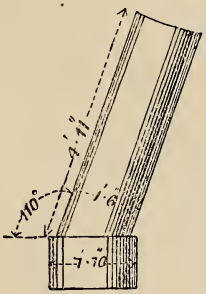


FIG. 9.

The bases of the columns, also round, are 1 foot 10 inches in diameter, and about a foot high. In six out of the seven columns the shafts do not rise perpendicularly from their respective bases, but slant upwards, at an angle of about 110 degrees from the horizontal line of the base (Fig. 9). The shaft of the seventh column (S) (Fig. 11), however, stands perpendicular on its base. Near these were six wedge-shaped, cylindrical blocks (Fig. 10) (*a*); and six rectangular blocks (*b*) of larger dimensions, which

worked into the shape of a pyramid, and which were 2 feet 8 inches broad and high, and 2 feet 4 inches across; also another (*c*) 1 yard high, 1 feet 8 inches broad and 1 foot across; and lastly, a column (A), consisting of a circular, conical shaft 4 feet 7 inches high, supported on a round base 10 inches high, these being respectively 1 foot 10 inches and 2 feet in diameter. It is evident that these together are the remains of what was once a six-sided, conical build-

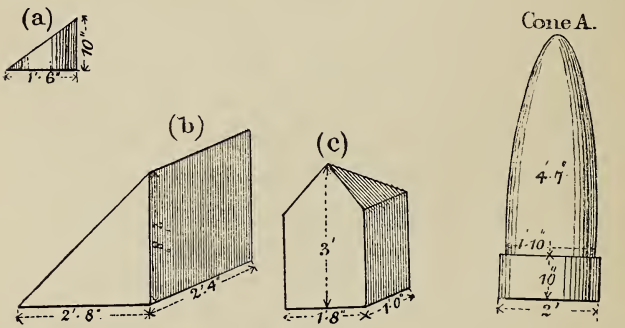


FIG. 10.

ing, probably the upper part of a Roman toll-house, or of a monument placed to mark the junction of two important roads. Apparently the slanting columns were placed at the angles, while in the centre the perpendicular one rose up and supported the cone A, which formed the apex of the whole (Fig. 11). On the base of the central perpendicular column (S) there is a defaced inscription in Roman characters, but of which the letters S . . . IB . . . P M . . . alone

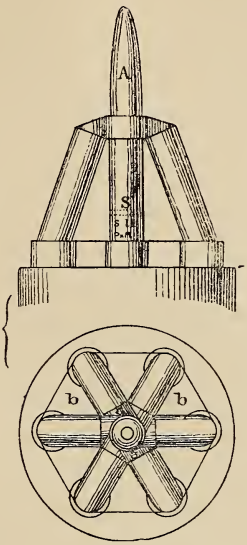


FIG. 11.

could be deciphered. These columns are of basalt, the central one (S) being worked with greater care than the other six, which are very roughly hewn.

'Ain Hamâtah.—A perennial spring, of considerable volume and of good water, but partially built up. It is near the Khurbet Hamâtah. From it a stream of excellent water runs round Jamleh, while another branch flows southwards into the Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn.

'Arab Izlûf.—A small Bedawin tribe, camping south of Esh Shejarah, and cultivating land there.

'Arab el Fuddel.—A branch of this great Bedawin

tribe inhabits Jaulân. They graze west and north of Esh Shejarah.

'Arab el 'Anazeh.—This great Bedouin tribe, which is the most numerous of those found in Haurân and Jaulân, have settled at 'Ain Dakkar, and graze their flocks in the northern part of the Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh. They will be more thoroughly described in the section relating to Western Haurân.

Beit Erry.—A small village on the upper part of the western slopes of Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn; its houses, about twenty-five in number, are built of stones and mud, and shelter a population of about ninety Muslems. It has some arable land in its neighbourhood. There are remains of ancient habitations of some considerable extent. Ritter, in his 'Erdkunde' (xv. *b*, ii. *b*, p. 826), mentions a ruin called 'Bethirra,' discovered by Seetzen, and quotes Josephus ('Antiq.,' xvii. 2), who makes mention of a certain 'Bethura' (*Βαθύρα*), which was a fortress built by Herod in Bathanea. The town during the Byzantine occupation was held by a garrison. Seetzen, however, seems to have been misled as to its position, for he places it to the south-east of Tsîl, it being in fact situated to the south-west, and above 11 miles due west of Tell el Ash'ary.

Bîr esh Shejarah.—A perennial spring of good water, to the north of the village of Esh Shejarah. A small stream runs from it, giving a good supply.

Beit Akkâr.—An important ruin on the western borders of the 'Allân. The remains are situated on an artificial hill, rising about 35 feet above the plain, which stands on the edge of a remarkable precipice of basalt rocks, curving round in horseshoe form, at the base of which winds the 'Allân. These perpendicular cliffs are from 70 to 90 feet in height. On its western flanks the hill is bounded by the *Wâdy Beit Akkâr*, which in summer is dry and is only of the length of the ruins, but which, from its depressed situation, must in winter to some extent be the bed of a torrent. Apparently this wâdy is not of natural formation, but has been dug out to form a ditch, and thus complete the fortified position of Beit Akkâr, which on the north-east and east is bounded by the high cliffs of the 'Allân (see Fig. 20). The position was therefore unapproachable, except by way of the neck running down to it from the north. Besides the ruins on the central hill, to be described presently, all the country bordering the above-mentioned gorge to the south, west, and north, for a distance of 100 yards and more in every direction, is covered with traces of large buildings, some above 30 and 40 yards square; the walls of which still stand some 3 feet above the plain. The main ruin on the hill consists of a solid rectangular building 43 feet square, the summit of which commands the whole neighbourhood. It is surrounded on the

east, south, and west by a covered corridor, 6 feet 6 inches wide and 5 feet high. The ceiling of this corridor is formed of slabs of basalt (Fig. 12). In

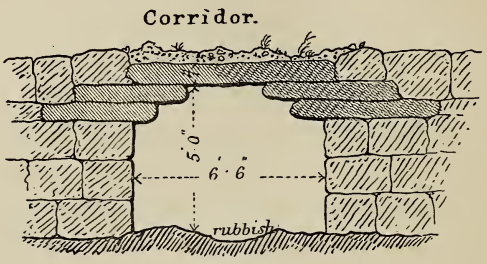


FIG. 12.

its southern side-wall are a series of openings or perpendicular loopholes, 2 feet square, divided one

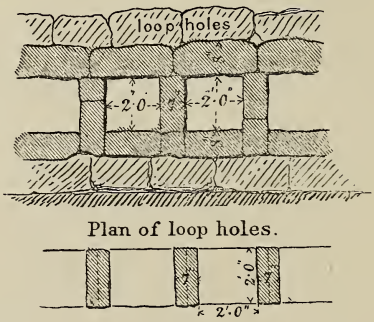


FIG. 13.

from the other by an upright stone (Fig. 13), and these look into a second corridor, running parallel with the southern length of the first, being 8 feet wide, 5 feet high, and roofed in the same manner ; and from this again other loopholes open into a third and

outer corridor. Towards the courtyard, the exterior corridor has no loopholes. It appears also that the corridors had no direct communication each with the other except through these loopholes. From the remains it is probable that the interior corridor had its entrance from the east; the middle one being entered from the west, and the exterior one from the west also. The walls of the main building are between 2 feet and 2 feet 3 inches thick, well built and cemented with white mortar, but at the present day they rise no higher than slabs which roof the

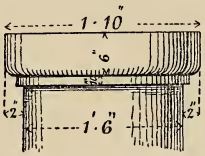


FIG. 14.

corridors, about 6 feet above the ground. This central building, which must have been the actual fortress, is surrounded by large masses of ruins which show traces of buildings and walls. On the east and west lies the court, in which are found the remains of columns, much weather-worn, of the shape given in Fig. 14. On the south side there are marks of a gateway through the inmost of the triple walls of defence; and from this gate steps must have led westwards down a descent entirely commanded by the works of the central castle. On the north-east also, it would

seem as though a gate had existed in the exterior wall. The first wall which surrounds the court is a yard thick, and, in the portion still standing, has loopholes towards the east. On a terrace below this, a second wall of still more solid construction runs round the hill, and on the lowest terrace, almost on the level of the plain, a third wall, 5 feet thick,

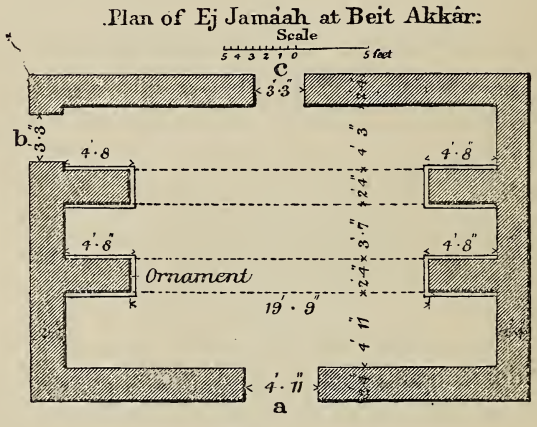


FIG. 15.

built of great blocks of basalt, is the outermost work of the fortification. On the north and north-east, where the castle is not defended by the ditch, this outermost wall is most carefully constructed, and is lofty in appearance; it is built, as stated before, of huge, rudely-shaped basaltic blocks without mortar, and must be of a much earlier date than the two upper walls, which contain building-stones

of more moderate size. In the northern part of the court, and near the castle, stands a well-preserved and very ancient building, now partly below the level of the ground, 33 feet 9 inches long outside and 22 feet 1 inch wide, called *Ej Jâma'ah* (Fig. 15). Inside it contains a single chamber divided by two flat-pointed arches into three nearly equal divisions. The unornamented piers, from which the arches spring, advance 4 feet 8 inches from the wall, leaving

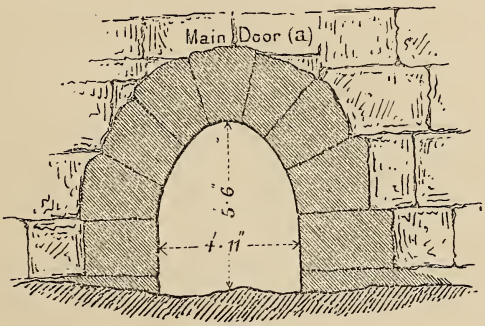


FIG. 16.

19 feet 9 inches for the span of each arch. The main entrance is from the south through an arched doorway (Fig. 16) (*a*), 4 feet 11 inches wide and 5 feet 6 inches high; the shape of the arch being an irregular oval, with a key-stone in the crown. Besides this there is a second door (*b*), 3 feet 3 inches wide, to the west, but now filled up; while a third door (*c*), 3 feet 3 inches wide, but blocked by a fig-tree, opens to the north. Both of these are of rectangular shape,

with horizontal lintels. The walls of the building are 2 feet 4 inches thick, well built, and without mortar, while the ceiling is formed of rude slabs of

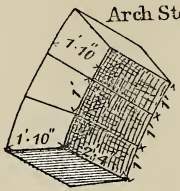


FIG. 17.

basalt. The stones which are used in the construction of the flat-pointed arches are hewn, and of

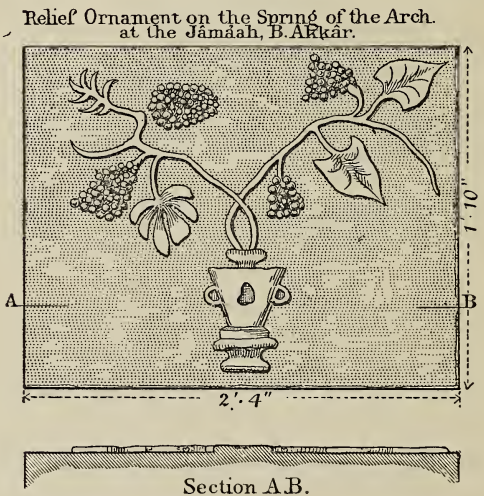
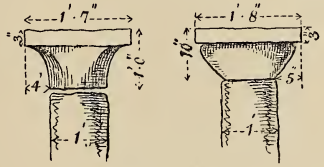


FIG. 18.

considerable size, for the voussoirs of the arches are 2 feet 4 inches through, and at the ends

measure 1 foot by 1 foot 10 inches (Fig. 17). Entering by the southern door, there is on the spring of the first arch a peculiar vine ornamentation roughly cut in the stone (Fig. 18); and in the yard, at the opening (*b*), are lying two roughly-worked and weather-worn capitals with their prostrate columns, which are 1 foot in diameter (Fig. 19). The floor of the arched room is now covered with mud and rubbish. From the spring to the crown of the



Basalt columns.
FIG. 19.

arch there is about 8 feet, while from the floor to the crown is 10 feet. The remains which cover the hill extend 480 feet from north to south, and about 300 feet from east to west; while the whole site covered by the ruins, including those found on the plain, occupies an area of about 17 acres.

The ruins on the plain and the central castle would apparently date from the time of the early Arab occupation of the country, but the massive exterior wall on the east and north, and the Jâma'ah, the building above described, where the vine ornament with the vase would suggest probably a Jewish

origin, must be referred at latest to the first centuries of the Christian era.

The ruins are at present uninhabited, and serve only as a shelter for the flocks; they are the property of

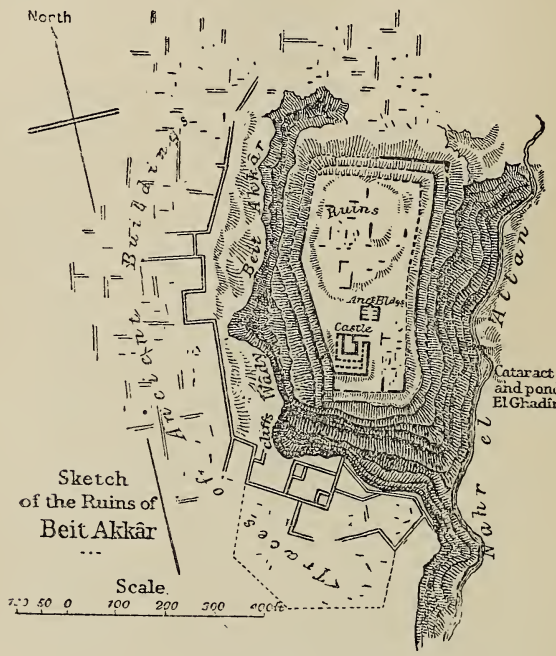


FIG. 20.

the people of Esh Shejarah. The accompanying plan of Beit Akkâr (Fig. 20), together with the reproduction of a photograph taken from the south (Fig. 21), may serve to make clear the foregoing description.

Buruk.—A copious spring rising a little north-east

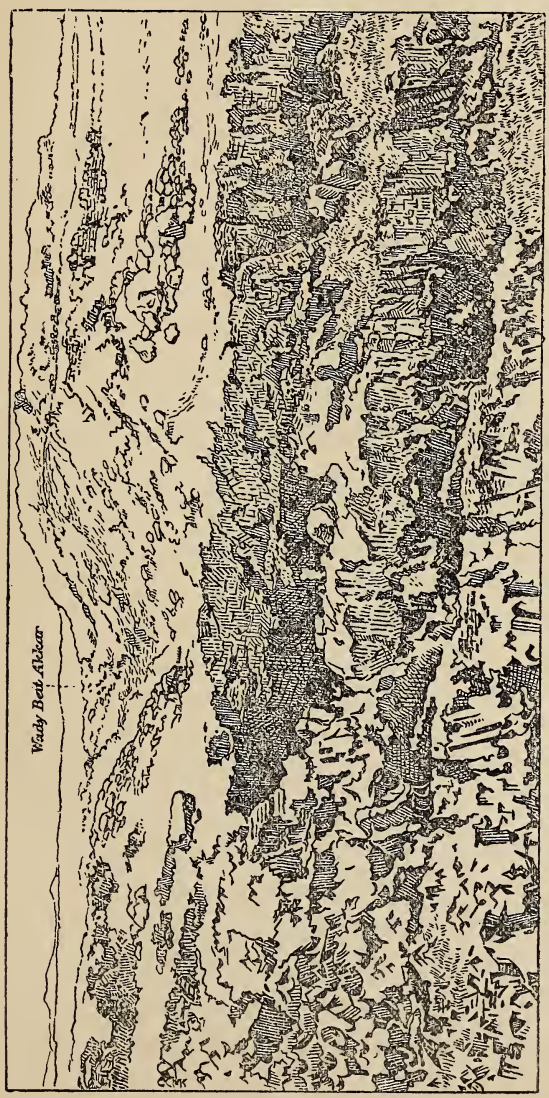
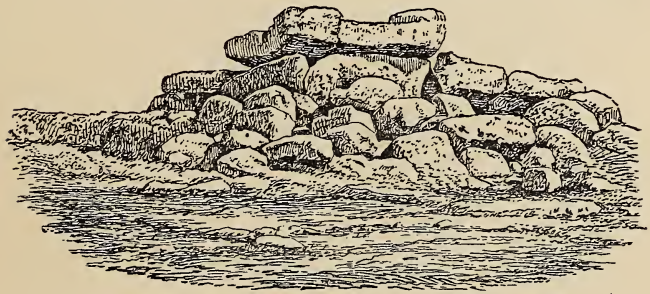


FIG. 21.—View of Beit Akkâr and its Gorge from the South. From a photograph.

of Tell Buruk, in a marsh. The stream, after passing through some small ditches, takes a southerly course to Kefr es Sâmir, where it joins the Wâdy of Moyet Ayyûb. In the beginning it is a rushing brook, but it soon disappears in the dry wâdy. (It bears the name Buruk alone, not 'Ain Buruk.)

Dolmens.—Coming from 'Ain Dakkar, and following the Roman road in a north-easterly direction towards the bridge of the Rukkâd, there occurs an extensive field of dolmens. The dolmen-field begins half a mile north-east of 'Ain Dakkar. Here a marsh, formed by a small spring, rising a little north of the road, surrounds a stony region of about 30 acres, which is completely covered with dolmens. 200 yards north of this again a second field extends for about a mile west, over a slightly elevated ground, down to the Jisr er Rukkâd, and covers an area of 120 acres. The dolmens have thus the Roman road as a southern limit, and go down to the Rukkâd, while a few extend over to the south of it, being situated close above the high cliff and cataract, and along the borders of that stream. Whether or not Khurbet Saidy, situated above the eastern cliff, was also formerly covered with dolmens, cannot now be clearly ascertained; but the remains of large flat stones, which almost cover the small hill, make this not an improbable conjecture. The whole country round is extremely stony, and quite unfit for cultiva-

tion, being covered with small volcanic mounds, from which are taken the large stone slabs used in the construction of dolmens. Figs. 22 and 26, reproduced from photographs, give the general appearance of these monuments. The first (A) is a specimen of an unopened dolmen, built on a double terrace of basalt stones, which has a total height of 3 feet 2 inches; on this is erected a row of upright



Dolmen near 'Ain Dakkar (A) Jaulân.
Scale
5 4 3 2 1 0 5 feet

FIG. 22.

slabs 3 feet to 4 feet 7 inches high, and 1 foot to 1 foot 8 inches thick. These surround a covered chamber, from 7 to 13 feet long, the sides of which are not parallel, for at its western extremity the average width is 4 feet 6 inches, and at its eastern 3 feet 3 inches only. The main axis of the building runs east and west. A single slab closes the eastern, another the western end, and generally two suffice for each of the long sides. On the top a great slab

of basalt—of an irregular square—7 to 8 feet or even more in either direction, and from 1 to 2 feet thick, covers the dolmen, having at the corners of the western end two raised headings (see Figs. 23 and 24). Should the chamber exceed 8 feet in

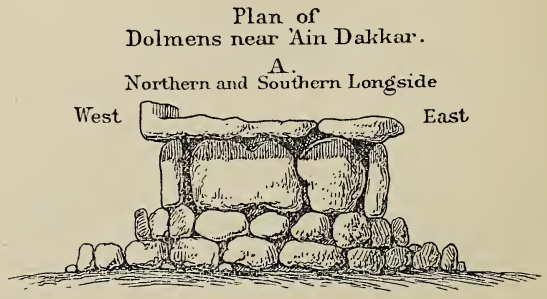


FIG. 23.

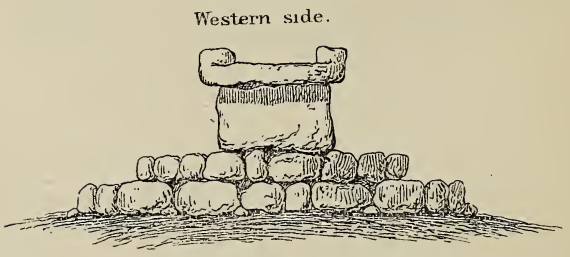


FIG. 24.

length, two slabs of irregular shape laid close together serve to cover it in. The double terrace on which the dolmen stands is circular in plan (Fig. 25), the lower terrace having a diameter of from 19 to 23 feet. Figs. 26 and 27 show a specimen

of an opened dolmen (B) without headings on the roofing slab, which is formed of two blocks. Otherwise the general arrangement is the same as that described in dolmen A.

The dolmens lie generally about 10 yards apart, but do not appear to have been placed in any regular

Ground Plan of a Dolmen with headings

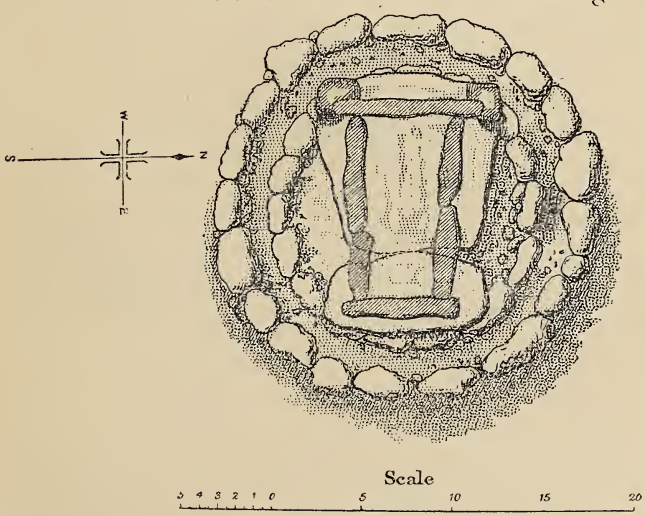


FIG. 25.

order. An examination of many specimens makes it apparent (1) that the dolmens of this district are always built on circular terraces, which elevate them about 3 feet above the ground; (2) that in most cases they are formed by six upright and two covering slabs; (3) that the major axis of the dolmens all run east

and west; (4) that the western side of the dolmen is broader than the eastern; (5) that the western side is often distinguished by headings, one on each corner of the top slab; and (6) that they vary in size from 7 to 13 feet in length.

When the great number of dolmens found in this field, and their lying in such close proximity each to

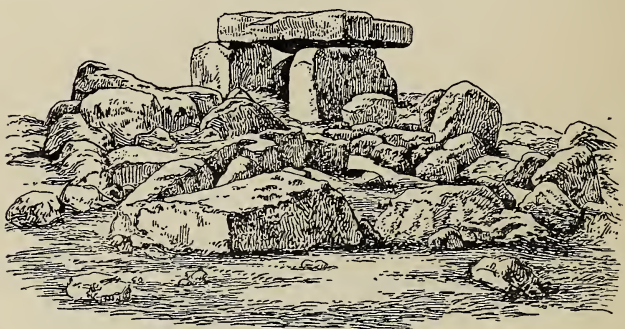


FIG. 26.

the other is considered in connection with the general characteristics noted above, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that these dolmens were built originally as burial-places. The covered chamber elevated above the ground, and shut in by slabs, was the first beginning of a sarcophagus; and the body was laid, facing the rising sun, with its head in the west,—as is proved by the orientation of the main axis, the double heading, and the greater width of the

western end. Since the greater number of the dolmens measured from 12 to 13 feet in length (those of from 7 to 8 feet being comparatively rare), it is possible that they were intended to contain two bodies each, in a line, unless it is deemed preferable to resort to the hypothesis 'that there were giants in those days.'

Mr. Guy le Strange, who visited this dolmen-field some months after my discovery of it, chanced to

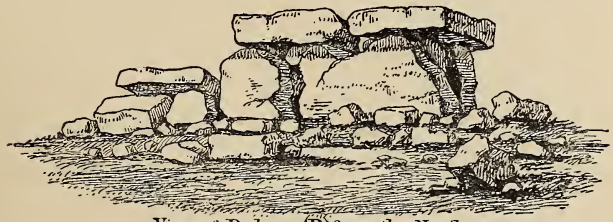


FIG. 27.

find one or two dolmens now for the most part in ruins, but in which he observed a small opening about 2 feet in diameter (being sufficiently large to crawl through), and of a roundish shape, pierced in the eastern end slab. Circular openings of this kind have been found in dolmens in other parts of the world; but I do not know that any have been noticed before in the Syrian specimens, and on the occasion of my first visit to this field I failed to observe them.

Standing on one dolmen, I counted round me over

160 of these monuments; and I compute that from two to three times that number would scarce suffice for the sum-total of all the dolmens found in this district.

A great many of these dolmens have already been opened by the natives, with a view of searching them for treasure, but hitherto without result, as they informed me; to the Arabs they are known by the name of *Kubûr Beni Israîl*—'the graves of the children of Israel.'

A considerable number however are still intact, and by opening them carefully, with the necessary instruments, interesting discoveries might possibly be made. In some of the ruined ones animal bones are found, which the Bedawin are prone to call bones of 'Beni Adam,' or sons of men; but in reality they are merely the remains of a feast of the jackals.

In Western Haurân also, not far from Tsîl, I discovered another field of Dolmens, which, as far as I am aware, has hitherto escaped observation. A description of it will be found in the next chapter.

During a second visit to the region lying between 'Ain Hamâtah and 'Ain Dakkar, I made the discovery that the dolmen-field of the 'Kubûr Beni Israîl' spreads over a far greater extent of ground than I had at first supposed. A more thorough examination of the volcanic mounds round Jamleh and Khurbet

Hamâtah shows that the summit of the greater number of the Tells is crowned by a fallen dolmen, the stones of which have been re-arranged by the Bedawin to serve as sheepfolds. Some, however, remain intact and are in their original condition of perfect dolmens.

In the opinion of my travelling companion, Dr. Noetling (a geologist), these 'Tells' have been thrown up from a stream of volcanic matter, which on its course has been obstructed by some obstacle, and, bursting out, has elevated these mounds to their present height. On these the lava or basalt occurs in slabs, and thus furnishes the material required in the construction of the dolmens. In the surrounding country, which is a region entirely covered by the lava stream, there are in many places other remains of dolmens, some fallen, some still standing. The Wâdy 'Ain Dakkar is their western limit, beyond which they do not appear. Eastwards they spread to a line which runs from Rujm Kariân to Kaukab, which line also forms the boundary of the lava stream on the east. North of 'Ain Dakkar the dolmens continue to be found for a considerable distance, and specimens occur up to Ghadîr el Bustân, and even further north; but they are here far more scarce than in the south. The best preserved specimens are found among those known as the Kubûr Beni Israîl; elsewhere they are all more or less in ruins,

though in general disposition they resemble the ones shown in Figs. 22 and 26. Near Khurbet Hamâtah, however, a few well-preserved dolmens are found, which differ slightly from those of the Kubûr Beni Israîl in that, instead of terraces, the dolmen is surrounded merely by a wall of stones (Fig. 28).

The dolmen itself is generally built up with two

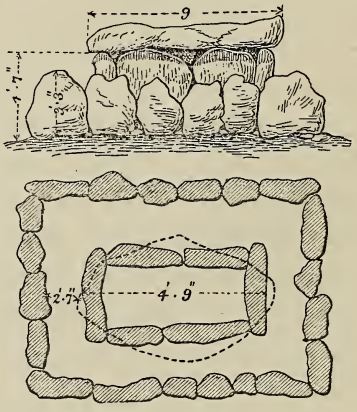


FIG. 28.

to three long slabs on each long side, and one across each end, west and east, with a roof of a single slab, or sometimes two set together. The interior is wider in the western than in the eastern end, the height being the same as in those near 'Ain Dakkar, but no opening in any of them was discovered. The whole dolmen outside has a length of from 8 feet 5 inches to 9 feet, and a width of 4 feet. 2 feet 7 inches from its walls a row of stones, 3 feet 3 inches high, sur-

round the dolmen, forming thus a rectangular fence in place of the circular terrace found in those near Beit Akkâr. The whole construction is often raised on a small mound, but sometimes stands on the level ground. The surrounding fence, which is nearly as high as the vertical stones forming the dolmen, masks the greater part of it, and gives to the whole a very strange appearance. The distances between these dolmens vary, and they are placed in no regular order.

Near to them are found lines formed by blocks of basalt, which serve to surround rectangular spaces of ground, about 26 feet long, by 13 feet wide; the major axis is from west to east, and the stones which stand round average 3 feet in height. No distinction as to the size or arrangement of the blocks is observable. These sacred squares are very numerous in the vicinity of Khurbet Hamâtah, and in their dimensions they vary considerably. The whole neighbourhood of Hamâtah would form a rich field for archæological investigation, and much that is both interesting and important might be gathered from the rude stone monuments which are here so numerous. After having again visited this portion of Jaulân, I am convinced that this region—which in geological times was covered by a wide stream of lava, and comprises all the land lying between Esh Shejarah and Tell el Farras, and, from

the Rukkâd and the 'Allân extends eastwards to the dolmens of Tsîl—is, in fact, but one vast field of these rude stone monuments. Nature had here provided the ancient inhabitants of the country with a suitable material from which to erect, here in the desert formed by the lava stream, monuments to perpetuate the memory of the dead.

El Ekseir.—A village of thirty-five huts, irregularly built, of stone and clay, now partly deserted, close to the steep northern bank of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh. The threshing-floor on the north is extensive. Here, in September, 1884, large quantities of wheat and barley were piled up ready for transport. The village has good arable lands. Ruins are found scattered about. The water-supply is from a copious perennial spring, *'Ain el Ekseir,* to the north, already described (see p. 46). The population number about 100 souls; but is decreasing, on account of the water they drink being so unwholesome and producing fever. The view from here is fine, commanding the head of the Yarmûk Valley, and the junction of the rivers Ehreir and Shelâleh (see Fig. 29).

Ghadîr el Bustân.—A deserted village, on the eastern borders of the Rukkâd, containing but few huts, partly inhabited, partly abandoned, and mostly used as storehouses for crops. Ruins are scattered about, springs are numerous, their waters now flowing through the neglected gardens. It is the highest

and most northern village of the Zawîyeh, its elevation being 1,912 feet above the sea.

Junction of the Ehreir with the S. el Menâdireh



View of the head of the S. el Menâdireh from near El Ekseir.

FIG. 29.—From a photograph.

El Ghadîr.—A round pool of beautiful, clear, blue water, formed by a cataract. It lies in the bed of

the 'Allân, near Beit Akkâr, and is swarming with fish. It is apparently deep, and is bordered by a luxurious growth of cane or 'kussub.' There is a second pool, of the same name, a little south of the first (see p. 17).

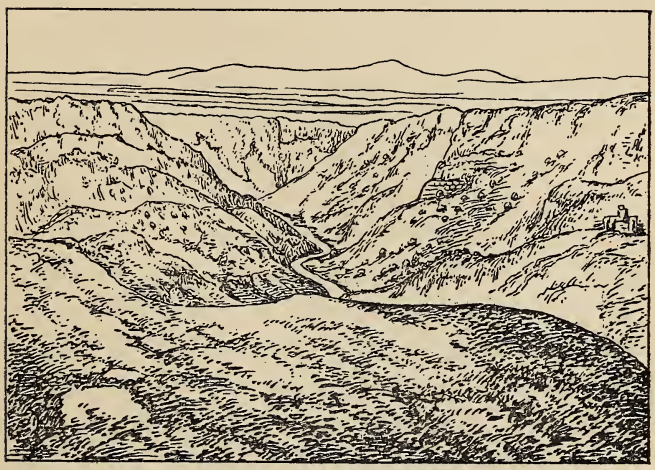
Hartah.—A village in the 'Ajlûn, unexplored. Extensive olive groves.

Khurbet Hamâtah.—Extensive ruins cover a hill, about a mile north-east of Jamleh. The spring, *'Ain Hamâtah*, has a considerable supply of good water, and is a perennial stream (see Dolmens, p. 69 et seq.).

Jamleh.—A village on the eastern slopes of the Rukkâd. It contains thirty-six huts, built generally of stone; its population consists of about 160 Muhammedans. The village, which is but a poverty-stricken place within, commands a fine view (see Fig. 30) down into the Rukkâd, with a portion of the northern Zawîyeh beyond. Vegetables are cultivated in the ground lying to the south-west and north of the village, where also fig-trees grow. The place is supplied with excellent water by the stream coming from 'Ain Hamâtah, which flows round the village and irrigates the gardens. Some ruins, built with large and ancient stones, are in the neighbourhood. There is but little arable land here, but a good pasture-ground lies to the south.

To the south-east, east, and north-east, lying close to the village, are great numbers of *Rujms*, or volcanic

mounds, which rise from 24 to 30 feet above the plain. On some of their summits may be found unevenly marked circles or squares, 8 to 10 feet across, formed of rude basaltic blocks. These would appear to be similar to the sacred circles described by Captain C. R. Conder in his 'Heth and



View up the Nahr er Rukkâd, from Jâmleh. with the Tell el Farras in the distance (North)

FIG. 30.—From a photograph.

Moab,' chap. vii. There are also traces of what must have been a rectangular building, standing close to the southern boundary of the village. Here large stones roughly shaped, between 4 and 5 feet long, and from 1 foot 6 inches to 2 feet high and thick, are found lying near each other. Judging

from these remains, Jamleh would appear to have been a place of considerable antiquity.

Ej Jenâneh, a slope formerly cultivated, and said to have been planted with fruit-trees (Jeneineh =little garden). It lies a little above the bed of the Rukkâd River, below 'Abdîn and westwards from the Tell el Ehdeib.

Jisr el 'Allân.—A stone bridge of four arches, now in ruins, crossing the Nahr el 'Allân, on the road between Tsîl and 'Ain Dakkar. The main arch is semicircular, and under it the diminished stream passes in summer. This arch has a span of 28 feet 10 inches, and is 13 feet 3 inches from its crown to the surface of the stream (September, 1884). East of it, there are two smaller pointed arches, one with a span of 10 feet; the other, at the margin of the bed of the stream, being 8 feet 3 inches. To the west of the great arch there is a single pointed arch 10 feet across. The arches are connected by piers, 5 feet 4 inches broad, having pointed stream-starlings towards the north, for the 'Allân brings down in its course a great quantity of mud. The whole bridge over the bed of the 'Allân is 115 feet long, and the roadway seems to have been carried in a horizontal line; it is 16 feet 4 inches broad, being thus a little narrower than the Roman road. There are remains of a causeway leading from the bridge, but now totally ruined, which carried the ancient

Roman road across a depression to the east. This would give for the original construction a total length of 660 feet. The stones of the Jisr el 'Allân are hewn and laid in white mortar, with small joints between, and the road platform was paved. The present road crosses the 'Allân, south of the Jisr, which is now completely ruined and unused. At its western end, a modern tomb is to be seen, also remains of dolmens are noticeable on this side; on the east, too, these monuments are found near the Jisr. (See above, Dolmens, p. 62).

Jisr er Rukkâd.—A stone bridge spanning the Nahr er Rukkâd, 1¼ mile north-west of 'Ain Dakkar. It has eight pointed arches. The three in the middle are each of them 16 feet 6 inches wide, and 12 feet high, from the crown to the water (September, 1884), and through them the stream flows in summer. East of these three middle arches there are a fourth and a fifth arch, respectively 15 feet 10 inches and 9 feet 9 inches wide. West of the three middle arches there are three which have each of them a span of 14 feet 9 inches. The arches are connected by piers 7 feet 11 inches broad, and have stream-starlings up the river (Fig. 31). The bridge is less broad than the one over the 'Allân. The roadway, which is 14 feet 9 inches across, is paved with basalt blocks, and runs in a horizontal line. Its total length is 249 feet. The Jisr er Rukkâd is at the present day in better

condition than is the 'Allân bridge, and was strongly built with mortar and good-sized stones. Its extremities, however, are in a ruined condition, and the bridge is therefore only used by foot-passengers, being impracticable for animals. The bed of the stream is crowded with great basaltic blocks, and the stream itself, in the rainy season, rises considerably and then becomes unfordable. This bridge is

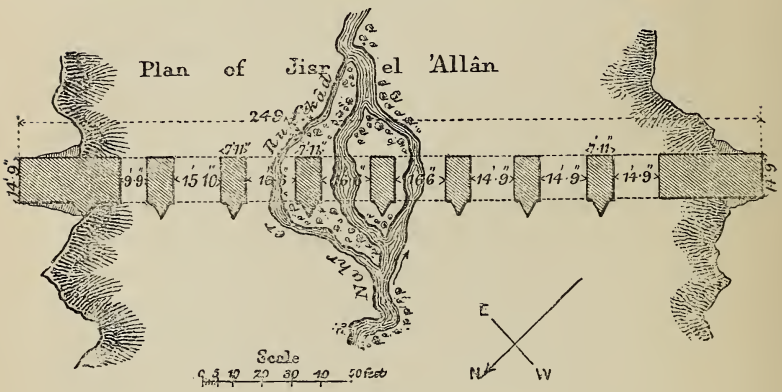


FIG. 31.

said by the Bedawin to mark the limit of snowfall in Eastern Jaulân, for as far south as this during the winter the snow regularly comes. The roadway of the bridge was found to have an elevation of 1,610 feet above the sea-level. In the bridges over the 'Allân and the Rukkâd it will be noted that the roadways are horizontal, and in this they differ from those over the Jordan built in Arabian times, where the highest point

is in the middle, the bridge sloping down towards its ends. Hence it is probable that the Jisrs of the 'Allân and Rukkâd date from Roman times, and this conjecture is supported by the fact that the two are still connected by a tolerably well-preserved Roman road.

El Kuweyyeh.—A few miserable huts, built of mud and stone, on the northern slopes of the Sharî'ah el Menâdireh. They are the property of the 'Arab el Menâdireh, who camp in this valley, and who use these huts as grain magazines. In the neighbourhood are springs, gardens of pomegranates, and vineyards, with other cultivated lands. Also there are some remains of ruins.

Kum ej Jarez.—A small mound, 1¼ miles south-west of Esh Shejarah, covered with scattered ruins.

Kum ez Zeyyatîn.—A small hill, 1 mile to the north-west of Esh Shejarah, having some ruins on its summit. The Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn passes by, and derives its name from the mound, which is said to have been formerly covered with olive-trees (Zeyyatîn).

Kefr el Ma.—A large and flourishing village of the Zawîyeh el Ghurbîyeh, the houses of which are generally built of stone. It stands on the summit of the western slopes of the Nahr er Rukkâd. The sheikh, Muhammed el Ahsein, states that the village contains over 100 men, which would give 225 grown people, or a total population of about 300 souls. They occupy about eighty houses. The streets are

wide and tolerably regular; the dwellings of the sheikh and his family are well-built, and are in the western part of the village. A good spring on the south quarter, surrounded by ancient masonry, supplies drinking water and irrigates the vegetable gardens. All around are scattered remains and ruins. Among the rest are noticeable broken capitals of the Corinthian order, with the acanthus-leaf ornamentation, also stones with Roman mouldings, and the

Part of Niche at Kefr el Ma.

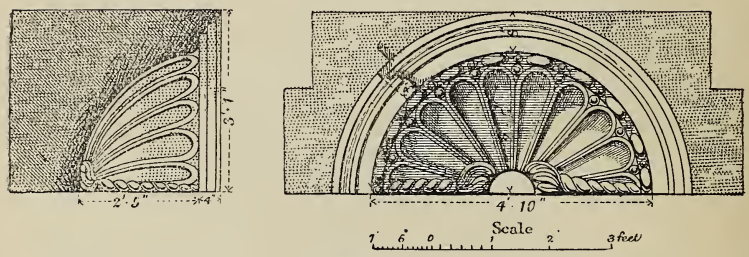


FIG. 32.

semicircular headpiece which once must have surmounted a niche illustrated in Fig. 32.

In the yard of one of the houses of the Fellahs I discovered an ancient statue of basalt (Figs. 33 and 34), 3 feet 2 inches high, which evidently is still standing on its original base; but the whole is now covered by rubbish, and lies below the level of the yard; and for a thorough investigation some excavation would be necessary. From this same place an altar (Fig. 35), 1 foot 10 inches high, has been dug up,



FIG. 33.—Ancient statue, found at Kefr el Ma. Photograph No. 1 (retouched).

Phot. 2. showing the head piece of the Statue.



FIG. 34.

and now stands in the sheikh's dwelling. These monuments have every appearance of dating from

the very earliest times, and I imagine they are relics of the ancient Haurânian worship. Dionysus or Dusârah appears to have been a god held in high esteem by the idolatrous Arabs of the first and second century A.D. The image here found may be that of the idol, and the altar, which is remarkable for the

Altar found at Kefr el Ma.

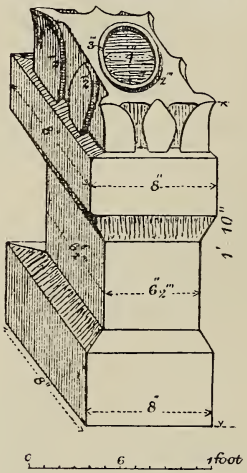


FIG. 35.

circular ornamentation which surrounds the top, I conclude may have served for offerings or libations to the god. The altar, I was told, was originally found on the top of the statue. It is, however, possible that the altar and idol are Phœnician in workmanship, and represent a deity allied to the Egyptian god Set. In 1 Maccabees ch. 5, a place *Alima* in Gilead is

mentioned, of which Kefr el Ma is possibly the site.*

Kaukab.—A ruin of some extent, lying south-east of the Rujm el Mushabbah. The remains consist of a remarkable pile of ancient building-stones, and there are traces of ancient walls, but the stones are devoid of ornamentation. The spot occupies a low elevation, in the stony part of Eastern Jaulân.

M'arri.—An uninhabited spot, where there are scattered ruins of considerable extent, but no remains of any archæological interest. It lies in close proximity to, and east of, 'Arkûb er Rahwah—the presumed Argob of the Bible—and on the same shoulder of the hill. The appellation 'M'arri' is from the name of a Muhammedan saint buried under an old butm or terebinth-tree near by. The 'Arab el Menâdireh cultivate the hill-slopes and grow tobacco here, also grain and vegetables. A few small caves were found near the tomb of the saint.

* When passing a night at this place during the autumn of 1884, I took occasion to note that the inhabitants, in pronouncing the name of their village, lay the accent on the syllable *él*, saying Kefr-él-Ma. This, I imagine, indicates that the name is not to be taken to mean, 'Village of the Water,' which would be the obvious explanation of the words, for in that case they would pronounce Kefr-ĕl-Má, with the accent on the *Má*. This peculiarity of the pronunciation, I think, confirms Mr. Schumacher's conjecture that we have here the modern equivalent of an ancient name, and renders the more plausible the identification with 'Alima' of the Book of Maccabees.—*G. le S.*

El Musreitîyeh. — A ruin standing close on the perpendicular eastern cliffs of the Rukkâd. It consists of scattered stones, which are evidently ancient, though now used to form sheepfolds.

Nahr er Rukkâd.—The large and rapid river, which divides the *Z*awîyeh esh Shurkîyeh from the *Z*awîyeh el Ghurbîyeh. It is a branch of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh (see above, p. 13).

Nahr el 'Allân, the boundary between the present Jaulân and Haurân. Together with the Wâdy el Ehreir of Haurân, it forms the head-waters of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh (see above, p. 16).

Nâfa'ah.—A village containing about thirty-five huts, built of stone and mud, situated on a slight elevation in the middle of the stony part of the *Z*awîyeh esh Shurkîyeh. Its arable land extends eastwards towards Kaukab and the 'Allân; the soil is good. The population consists of about 160 Muhammedans. The village must have been more important in former times, as is shown by the considerable remains, which surround it, of modern and ancient dwellings. To the east are the ruins of a large building known as *El Khân.*

Râs el Hâl, also called *Tell el Ehdeib.*—A remarkable peak, rising 1,060 feet above the sea-level, and forming the eastern end of a long ridge, which rises in the Rukkâd Valley between Jamleh and Kefr el Ma. At its northern point the slope is very abrupt

down into the Rukkâd, having at the north-eastern angle a cliff 522 feet high. Its southern slopes are more gentle, and only attain an elevation of about 300 feet, bordering a pleasant valley, irrigated by a small stream of good water. The Tell el Ehdeib thus divides the Rukkâd Valley into two parts. Along its highest ridge traces of ruins were observed (see above, p. 6).

Rasm el Haurah.—A basaltic and volcanic mound in the northern part of the Zawîyeh, some 300 yards north of the Roman road. Its summit is fenced round with stones to form sheepfolds. The country in the vicinity of this mound is peculiar, and would repay careful investigation by a competent geologist. In its neighbourhood a series of volcanic mounds, 10, 20, and 30 feet high, are found, enclosing little dells which are watered by brooks rising from no visible source. They run off into the desert and dry up in summer, or else form small marshes, overgrown by plants, and their valleys are a rich grazing-place for the Bedawin flocks. One of these is the stream that runs down the *Wâdy el Ghâr*. These mounds are evidently small extinct craters, and have much the appearance of those which cover the Trachonitis or Lejjah.

Rujm Kariân.—A small volcanic mound, rising above the ancient lava stream, situated about a mile south of Nâfa'ah. The *'Ain Kariân* is a spring of

moderate supply, with no stream running from it; it is close to the foot of the *Rujm.*

Rujm el Mushabbah.—One of the highest of these mounds. Surmounting it is a cairn of stones 25 feet high, set up by the 'Anazeh Bedawin, which serves as a watch-tower for the shepherds who tend the flocks of the 'Arab el 'Anazeh during the spring season. It is situated south of the Roman road, between the two Jisrs of 'Allân and Rukkâd.

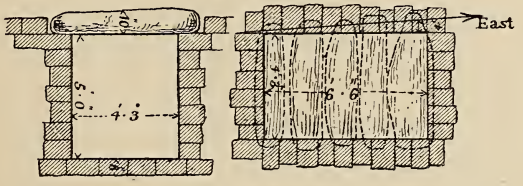
Rujm el Akrei'a.—A volcanic mound, north of the Roman road, near the Jisr el 'Allân.

Shejarah esh Sheikh Ahsein.—The tomb or weli of a Muhammedan saint, under an ancient butm tree (terebinth), near the Rujm el Meshabbah.

Esh Shejarah.—A large village in the southern part of the Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh. It contains 138 houses, and has a Muhammedan population of rather over 450 souls. The upper quarter of the village is remarkable for its wide streets, containing the dwellings of the sheikh, his family and relations. The houses here are neatly built of masonry, being carefully plastered without. Below this is the quarter of the Fellahîn, where the huts are of mud and stone, as in the villages already described. And surrounding this again is a suburb of mean hovels, many of them partly covered in and walled with mats, which harbour every kind of vermin. This last quarter is tenanted by emigrants from other villages

and Bedawin, who here make their first essays in town life.

During the winter of 1882 the inhabitants discovered and opened an ancient tomb, excavated in the ground lying to the north of the village. This tomb (Fig. 36) is of rectangular shape, 6 feet 6 inches long, 4 feet 3 inches wide, and 5 feet deep; its longer side running nearly exactly east and west. It is well built of carefully hewn basalt blocks, and



Section. Plan.

FIG. 36.—Tomb at Esh Shejarah.

was roofed with unhewn slabs of the same material. The villagers asserted that they had found several skulls lying at the western end of the tomb. These they had reburied, but declined to show me the spot. I was, however, fortunate enough to dig up some teeth and the parts of a skull, which had recently been reburied near the ancient tomb. The fragments are well preserved, and their number would tend to show that the tomb was constructed to be the burial-place of more than one individual. I also found in the tomb some pieces of ancient glass bottles, very thin, which were probably

the remains of lachrymatories. These I would suggest indicate a Roman origin. The arable land round Esh Shejarah is not extensive, but there is splendid pasturage, and its inhabitants possess large flocks of cattle and goats. The neighbourhood to the north is covered with Sîar, or sheepfolds, and in former times was often harried by the Bedawin, and the townsmen had much to suffer from their incursions. This state of things lasted down to the time when the powerful Sheikh 'Abd Allah el Midyab—of one of the oldest and most influential families of Western Haurân, and who resided at Nawâ—became Sheikh of Esh Shejarah. The respect in which he is held now affords protection to property. Since his advent, Esh Shejarah has considerably increased, and would continue to prosper, but that most of the inhabitants are in debt to rich and unscrupulous money-lenders at Damascus, who grind them down to a state that is little better than slavery.

The town is well supplied with water by the *'Ain el 'Aliyah*, lying to the west, a good perennial spring, which irrigates the vegetable and melon gardens; and also by the *Bîr esh Shejarah*. Both of these give wholesome water. The rich Sheikh 'Abd Allah is a gentlemanly and hospitable Arab, whose 'Menzûl,' or room for strangers, is always filled with guests. The food provided is sup-

plied by his numerous flocks. He was originally a Bedawin; is now about forty years of age, tall, with a long black beard, and is urbane in manner and imposing in appearance. On the flat roof of his dwelling he has constructed huts for the summer-time, made of the branches of the terebinth. Of these the floor and the sides are covered with a plastering of clay mixed with straw, the latter up to a height of 2 feet 6 inches, being from 3 to 5 inches thick; and these form a safe sleeping-place, which is greatly preferable during the hot weather to any of the interior rooms. The sheikh is courteous, and exceptionally communicative to Europeans, and only becomes taciturn when asked about the number of people in his village, or the area of land cultivated by them. To such questions no truthful answers can be expected from either the inhabitants of this country, or from those of Western Palestine; for it is always imagined that they are put with the view of the assessment of extra taxes. The number of houses and population given, here and elsewhere, have therefore been based on my own observations; and letters of recommendation from the Governor-General himself would fail to elicit reliable information.

From Esh Shejarah northwards, the Zawîyeh is covered with small mounds, crowned by sheepfolds, and the tract is known by the name of Ej Jebâl (The

Hills). Snow occasionally falls in winter round Esh Shejarah, which has an altitude of 1,334 feet above the sea-level, although, as before-mentioned, the Jisr er Rukkâd is usually held to be the limit, south, of this occurrence. On the 4th of September, 1884, at a quarter to seven in the morning, the thermometer marked 67° Fahrenheit; and at ten in the forenoon, 75°. There had been a considerable dew-fall during the night.

Sharî'at el Menâdireh—also called by the Arabs Yarmûk, the representative of the ancient Hieromax—is the large river which forms the boundary line between the Jaulân and the Jebel 'Ajlûn. At its junction with the Jordan it carries the same amount of water as does this last river, which it joins north of the Jisr el Mejâmî'ah. Its affluents are the streams of the Wâdy el Ehreir, the Moyet *Z*eizûn, and the Wâdy esh Shelâleh, the three main rivers of Haurân. Its present name is derived from the Menâdireh Bedawin. Further details have been given above (see p. 8).

Shuffet el Ekseir.—The promontory separating the 'Allân from the Sharî'at el Menâdireh, and rising south-east of the village of El Ekseir. It commands a fine view over the junction of the three rivers of Haurân just referred to.

Seisûn.—A ruin on the Wâdy Seisûn, till lately inhabited, but now deserted. It is occasionally

tenanted by the goat-herds and their flocks. The ancient ruins cover a considerable extent of land.

Khurbet Saidy.—A small ruin on a mound, close to the Rukkâd near its Jisr (bridge). There are traces of a building, probably an old khân.

Sahem ej Jaulân.—A large village situated in the western part of Western Haurân, but for administrative purposes considered as belonging to Jaulân. The village is built in a better style than any of the other villages of Jaulân. Its houses, although many of them are abandoned and now in ruin, are built with stone, very few being the usual huts of mud generally met with, and the streets are wide and mostly straight. It is evident from the ornamentation and character of the building-stones that we have here the relics of an ancient Christian community. Among these the present generation has built itself habitations. The village at present contains about sixty or seventy inhabited houses, with a population of somewhere near 280 souls; but double this number would scarce suffice to fill the dwellings that are now uninhabited and falling into ruin. The village, further, although situated in an apparently healthy country, on a rich soil, and plentifully supplied with water, is nevertheless decreasing in the number of its inhabitants. Vegetable gardens and orchards border the stream which runs to the west of the village in the Wâdy

esh Shefeil, but they are now in miserable condition. The cause of this decay is to be sought in the fact of the villagers having pledged most of their farms and dwellings to usurers; and furthermore, having lost all hope of being able to redeem them, they have lapsed into a state of lethargy. They are apt to be sulky and hostile to foreigners. Such a state of affairs, when met with in this country, very generally has its origin in conditions similar to those above mentioned. The Fellahîn and Bedawin of Haurân and Jaulân, if treated with justice and prudence, and with a due knowledge of their customs, are kindly and inoffensive; a little importunity in the matter of presents is always to be expected, and may be forgiven them for their poverty. In the present instance, however, I had great trouble in obtaining information about the place, and I was treated with such hostility, while copying some of the inscriptions and drawing the antiquities, that I was obliged to hurry over my work, and confine myself only to the most important objects. I was informed by the inhabitants that from their forefathers it was reported that this place, long ago, had been the 'capital of Jaulân,' and the seat of government. This statement I had confirmed from other sources; and remarking the extensive ruins, together with the size and general plan of the village, I feel inclined to believe that we have here

the site of ancient Jaulân, the capital of Gaulanitis, the modern Jaulân. Its modern name, also, of Sahem ej Jaulân, in its latter half is not merely an addition to distinguish it from a second Sahem in the Jebel 'Ajlûn; for there are frequent instances of names occurring twice over in this country, without the addition of any epithet for their distinction. An argu-

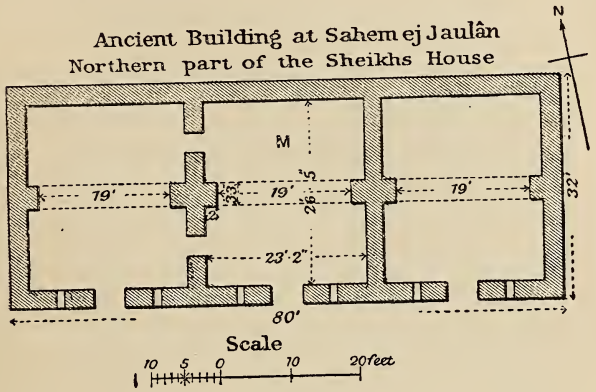


FIG. 37.

ment in support of this identification is to be found in the above-mentioned tradition of the natives, and in the fact that the place is still held to form part of Jaulân, although situated geographically within the limits of the present Haurân. The principal ancient remains in Sahem ej Jaulân are found in the northern quarter; for the village is divided into three parts, which lie separate to a certain extent each from the other. Here there is a large building (Fig. 37),

80 feet long and 32 feet wide, which is constructed of large stones of carefully hewn basalt, and has every appearance of having originally been a Crusading church. It is still well preserved. This building and three others form a square, and surround the sheikh's yard. They are all one storey high, and rectangular in plan, with flat roofs, and are at

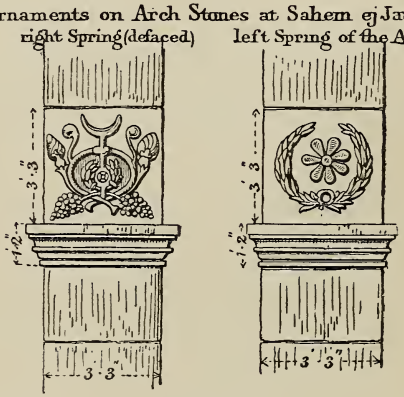


FIG. 38.

present occupied by the sheikh and his family. The northern and largest building (Fig. 37) contains three rooms, divided by walls which are over 2 feet thick, each room being 26 feet 5 inches long, and 23 feet 2 inches wide inside, and about 18 feet high. The ceiling of each of the three rooms is supported by a round arch, the masonry of which is 3 feet 3 inches thick, and its span 19 feet. The arch piers of the centre room (M) project about 2 feet from the wall, and are crowned

with a moulded impost. The faces of the two lowest voussoirs of the arch to right and left are ornamented in bas-relief, as shown in Fig. 38. The building is covered with a flat roof constructed of long hewn slabs of basalt, the arrangement being illustrated in

Interior of the Ancient Building of the Sheikh at Sahem ej Jaulan

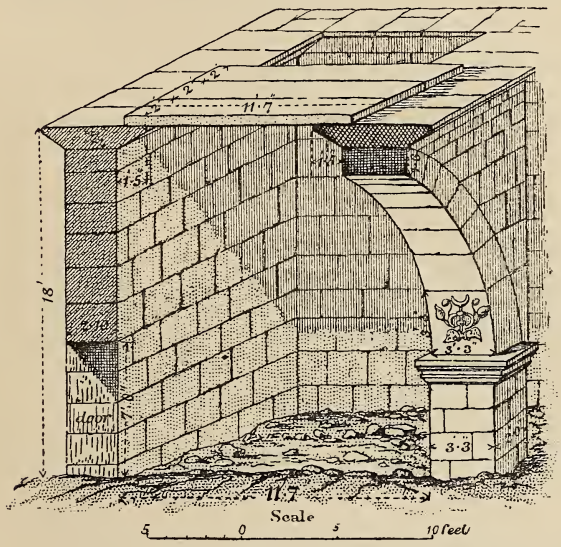


FIG. 39.

Fig. 39. The roofing slabs have on them an ornamentation in the form of crescent moons and crosses, carved in bas-relief (Fig. 40); and on a stone in the angle formed by the junction of the northern and western wall, and hence pointing due

north, is carved an arrow 3 feet long, which would apparently serve to indicate that point of the compass. The floor of these rooms is now covered with mud; the walls, on which in some places crosses



FIG. 40.

were cut, are in most parts now hidden by a coating of clay, which in its turn is concealed by a layer of soot, and the building is at present in use as a stable.

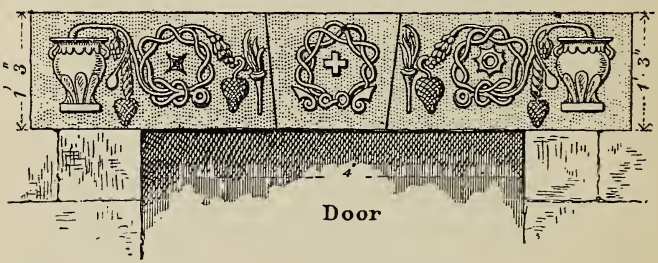


FIG. 41.—Bas-relief ornament on the lintel of a southern door of the sheikh's building at Sahem ej Jaulân.

The main front faces the south, and into each room opens a rectangular doorway surmounted by great lintel stones of basalt. Over the doorway leading into the middle room (M) is a square-headed arch, composed, including the key-stone, of three

blocks ornamented as shown in Fig. 41. The doorways leading into the side rooms have merely a cross on the lintel (Fig. 42). On either side of the doorway leading into each room are square windows, of small size, placed at a height of 14 feet above the ground. Their appearance in elevation and section is given in Figs. 44, 45. From the centre chamber (M) two doorways open into the room on the left. The centre room is the principal one of the building; and in spite of there being no apse, must, I think, originally have served as the chapel. The hewn



FIG. 42.



FIG. 43.



FIG. 44.

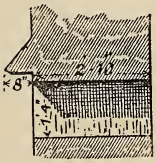


FIG. 45.

stones used in its walls are all of large dimensions, some reaching 7 feet in length by 2 feet in thickness and width.

In the most western part of the south face of the building is an opening, intended to serve as a window. Its peculiar ornamentation is illustrated in Fig. 46.

The gateway leading into the sheikh's yard is surmounted by a huge lintel, on which, in the middle, is cut a cross (Fig. 43). The other ancient buildings which surround the sheikh's yard were, at the

time of my visit, occupied by the family, and I could not therefore explore them.

In the south-east of the village stands a tower,

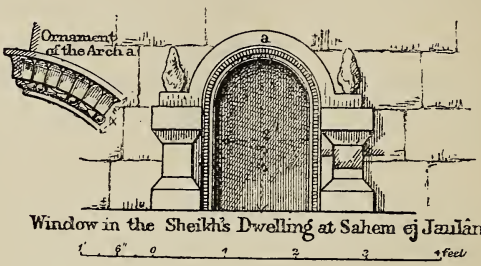


FIG. 46.

called indifferently the *Jâm'aah*, or *Mêdany;* it is about 50 feet high, and very similar to those which will be described later on in the sections relating to

Mausoleum at Sahem ej Jaulân

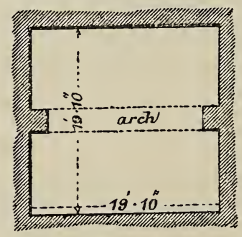


FIG. 47.

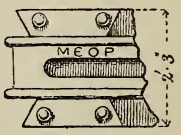


FIG. 48.

Ed Dera'ah, Tuffas, and Nawâ. A short distance outside the village, to the east, is an underground building, apparently a tomb. It measures 19 feet 10 inches square, and is spanned by the remains of an

arch. The walls have been almost entirely demolished by the natives, who have been hunting here for treasure (Fig. 47). A broken stone, bearing a portion of a Greek inscription (the only one discovered in Sahem ej Jaulân) was here dug out of the rubbish (Fig. 48).

We left Sahem ej Jaulân after sun-down, and, guided by the rising moon, returned to our tents, along a broad road, entirely free from stones, skirting the now deserted fields. Here the rich soil would prove an inexhaustible treasure in the hands of the Fellahîn, would they but cease their treasure-hunting, and do more than impotently labour to destroy what others have laboured to build.

Tabarîyah.—A ruin situated about a mile east of M'arri. There are here no remains except scattered stones, hewn and unhewn, which occupy a portion of the narrow shoulder and the upper slopes of the Rukkâd. The considerable extent covered by these remains, and the fact that the whole slope is known by the name of '*Tabarîyah*,' would seem to prove that the place was of importance in ancient times. The name is identical with that of the town on the Sea of Galilee, Tiberias; and would lead to the inference that the spot marks the site of a Roman town. At the present day the industrious 'Arab el Menâdireh have under cultivation all the ground in the vicinity of the ruins.

Tell el Hâwy.—A small hill close to the junction

of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh and the Rukkâd. It forms the extreme western projection of the Râs 'Arkûb er Rahwah (see above, p. 43). The hill is also known among the 'Arab el Menâdireh by the name of Tell el Ferdâwy. On the southern and western slopes of the hill are traces of an ancient wall of considerable strength, and on the hill itself, scattered about, were to be seen many well-squared building-stones. These show that the spot was in old times covered by habitations and possibly was fortified.

Tell ej Jamîd.—A mound on the left bank of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh. On the summit stand what are apparently ancient walls; they may have served either as a fortification or be the remains of a sacred circle. The stones used are rude and of large size. The Bedawin informed me that 'oil' was occasionally seen welling out at the foot of the hill, and on festival days it was their habit, they said, to set this on fire, when the whole Tell covered by the 'oil' would blaze up. I cannot confirm this statement by my own observations, but possibly asphalte or bitumen might be found at this spot.

Tell el Ehdeib.—(See *Râs el Hâl*, p. 84.)

Tawâhîn esh Sheikh Muhammed el 'Anazeh.—Two mills in the Wâdy 'Ain Dakkar, the property of the great Bedawin sheikh of the 'Anazeh.

Tâhûnet el Ghazâleh.—A mill of primitive construc-

tion, with a single stone, on the 'Allân, opposite Beit Akkâr. A small canal, built of stone, conducts a stream of beautifully clear water to the mill. The Tâhûnet el Ghazâleh, as well as the two others near it, are the property of the people of Sahem ej Jaulân.

Tâhûnet Jamleh.—A small mill turned by the powerful waterfall of Wâdy Seisûn. It is the property of the people of Jamleh.

Tiâh Beit Akkâr.—The cataracts and waterfalls of the 'Allân, which border on the south the ruins of Beit Akkâr.

Wâdy 'Uleika.—Dry in summer. Runs east of the 'Arak el Heitalîyeh from 'Ajlûn to the Sharî'at el Menâdireh. Unexplored.

Wâdy Keleit.—A large wâdy of 'Ajlûn, through which passes a small perennial stream, running into the Sharî'at el Menâdireh near the junction of the Rukkâd. Unexplored.

Wâdy esh Sha'eib.—Joins the Sharî'at el Menâdireh west of El Ekseir. Small and dry in summer.

Wâdy el Ku'eilby.—A small perennial stream coming down from Hartah in 'Ajlûn. It joins the Sharî'at el Menâdireh very near the Wâdy esh Sha'eib, and not far from some mills. Unexplored.

Wâdy el Mughr.—A small perennial stream of clear water. It runs into the Rukkâd to the west of

'Abdîn. At its head there are some natural caves, occasionally occupied by poor Fellahîn.

Wâdy Sha'eib el Hawwâr.—Dry in summer. It rises below 'Abdîn, and runs along a north-westerly course to the Rukkâd.

Wâdy ez Zeyyatîn.—Rises at 'Ain Hamâtah. It takes a southerly course as far as the Kum ez Zeyyatîn, and thence bearing south-west, ultimately joins the Sharî'at el Menâdireh. It has a good perennial stream (see above, p. 10).

Wâdy Seisûn, or *Wâdy 'Ain Dakkar.*—Rises at 'Ain Dakkar. The water of this spring is superior to that of any other in the country, being sweet, cool, and wholesome. The spring is built up with ancient masonry. The stream takes at first a south-easterly direction as far as the mills of the 'Anazeh sheikh, and is called Wâdy 'Ain Dakkar. Below this its course turns south-west, and continues with this direction down to its junction with the Rukkâd, this portion being known under the name of Wâdy Seisûn, from a ruin that is on its borders. A magnificent waterfall occurs about half a mile west of Seisûn (see above, p. 15).

Wâdy el Ghâr.—A small muddy stream, nearly dry in summer, winding amongst the volcanic mounds ¾ of a mile north-west of the Jisr el 'Allân (see Rasm el Haurah, p. 85).

CHAPTER III.

VILLAGES, RUINS, NAMES OF PLACES AND BEDAWIN TRIBES MET WITH IN THE DISTRICT OF WESTERN HAURÂN.

'Arab el 'Anazeh.—The largest and most numerous Bedawin tribe met with throughout Haurân. The 'Arab el 'Anazeh are divided into four branches: 1. Er Ruwalleh; 2. El Ibsheir (Bisheir); 3. Wulid 'Ali es Smeir; and 4. El Hassaneh. Of these the Wulid 'Ali camp for the most part in Western Haurân and Eastern Jaulân, while the other clans occupy the Jebel 'Ajlûn, a part of the Belkah and the Syrian Desert. Down to the close of the first half of the present century this great Arab tribe held all the country of Jaulân and Haurân, as well as part of 'Ajlûn, and while occupying themselves, for the most part, as highwaymen, were at the same time the 'protectors' of certain of the villages against other nomads, for which protection they received the 'Khûweh,' or Brother-share, which took the form of a contribution of grain and flocks. A village so taxed

was called the 'Ukht,' or sister, of the protecting tribe. This method of earning bread without labour was practised down to a very recent date. The deserted villages now so frequently found in the midst of rich fertile lands owe their present desolation to the villagers not having been able to pay their 'Khûweh' regularly, and hence having been given over to plunder. The inhabitants, fearing further ill-treatment, have migrated, and settled together, many villages joining to form a single community (as at Esh Shejarah, Tsîl, Tell esh Shehâb, Nawâ), where with greater effect they could resist attack.

This 'Khûweh' has come to an end, with the increased power of the central government, but the Fellahîn are now being ruined by a slower but more certain method, which is the extortion practised by the usurers in the Syrian towns.

The grazing-grounds of the Wulid 'Ali, the tribe with which I most often came in contact, are now limited to but a small portion of the lands they formerly occupied. The northern boundary of their pastures in Haurân is the Tell ej Jemû'ah, the battle-ground in old days of the Bedawin clans. The last battle fought here occurred, as I was told, under Sultan Mahmud, and its result was to give to the Wulid 'Ali the right of grazing their flocks up to this Tell. Should their privileges ever be infringed by any other tribe, the Wulid 'Ali hoist a flag on the top

of the hill, and it is a signal of war, calling the 'Aulâd' (the members of the tribe) to arms. I had practical experience of this matter, not at the Tell ej Jemû'ah, but in Northern Jaulân, where a like custom exists. On a hill, situated in the district of the 'Arab el Fuddel, I had occasion, during the survey, to set up a triangulation staff with a white and red flag. Almost immediately on its appearance armed men of the tribe gathered to the place, and I had great trouble in satisfactorily explaining to them the real object of my manœuvre.

In Eastern Jaulân, the Wulid 'Ali tribe do not go further north than 'Ain Dakkar, the limit of their grazing-grounds being, in fact, about two miles south of this place. In Western Haurân their neighbours on the north are the 'Arab en Nu'êm, but on the south they are without rivals. The principal summer grazing-ground of the head sheikh and his family lies between the Tell es Semen and El Mezeirîb, round Tell el Ash'ary. In the beginning of September, 1884, I came on the tribe near the Jisr el Ehreir. Two days before, while calling on the Mutasarrif of the Haurân, who happened to be staying at El Mezeirîb, I saw Muhammed ibn es Smeir, the head sheikh of the Wulid 'Ali. The respect with which he was treated by the Governor attracted my notice at the time, but I did not make his acquaintance until after returning to my camp, whither he fol-

lowed me, accompanied by a number of horsemen. These Bedawin all treated him with the greatest reverence, and the respectful way in which my Zaptîehs saluted him made me understand that I had to deal with a sheikh of some distinction. I invited him to enter the tent, and, after the usual compliments, he began by asking:

'Do you know me, O Beij?' (the title given by the Bedawin to townsmen—in Turkish, Bey).

'No,' said I; 'but nevertheless welcome, and may Allah make us friends.'

'So you do not know me?' he repeated, as though struck by my ignorance. And then, turning full on me his face, which was quite patriarchal with the long white beard, and fixing on me a pair of eyes that in truth rivalled those of the gazelle in lustre, he said very quietly, 'You will hear! Did you ever, perchance, hear of the victorious tribe of the 'Anazeh? the descendants of 'Ali es Smeir—may Allah have mercy upon him!—and he of the noble family of the Kureish, the same of whom our great Prophet was a member?'

As my reply was now in the affirmative, he raised his head a little, and with a look of manly pride exclaimed:

'Then I, brother, am Muhammed ibn es Smeir, the sheikh of the Wulid 'Ali, which are of the 'Anazeh.'

And one of his companions added in a whisper: 'Sultân el Barr' (Lord of the Land).

He very shortly became extremely confidential; and after a long talk about politics, inquiring about the object of the survey and other matters, he invited me most cordially to come and see him in his tents. I went to return the visit a couple of days later, and came to a place near the Jisr el Ehreir, where was pitched the encampment of about five hundred black goat-hair tents; these were scattered over a rich pasturage, and looked from a distance very like a number of grazing cattle. The sheikh's tent was distinguished by its greater size, and round it were those of the members of his family, beyond which again were the tents of the remainder of the tribe. Before the tent-door his horses, thoroughbreds, were tethered. Muhammed es Smeir, on perceiving me, came out of the tent, and shook me by the hand, his welcome being the usual Bedawin salaam, 'Gawwak!' (May Allah strengthen you!); and then, 'Not as a stranger you enter my house' (for they call their tents 'Buyût,' houses), 'but as a friend;' and with many ceremonial speeches he led me within.

I now observed that he only used the left hand, and subsequently heard that his right had been lost in the recent war against the Druses of Jebel Haurân. He is a short, stout man of about fifty-five,

and speaks very slowly, accentuating the phrases of most import; his face the while has an expression of great earnestness, which, however, at times gives place to a smile. His appearance is sedate, and his bearing princely, but devoid of all arrogance of manner. On the present occasion he was dressed in a long silver-brocaded ''Abbâ' (or cloak), under which he concealed his wounded arm; a gold brocaded silk 'Kuffîyeh' (kerchief) was tied round his head, and Bedawin boots of yellow leather covered his feet. A saddle for cushion was placed under my elbow; and we sat in the tent, the floor of which was covered with Persian carpets. The whole tent was about 190 feet long and 30 feet wide, being divided into two sections by a screen of goat-hair; the larger section, some 140 feet long, was for the guests, being used also as the general place of assembly of the tribe, while the second apartment was appropriated by the 'Harîm' of the sheikh. The larger chamber was soon filled by the elders of the tribe, respectable-looking men, urbane in manner, who showed me every attention; and in the course of the conversation which ensued, at my request, they described their life and occupations, from which the following account has been drawn up.

In October of each year, before the first rains fall, the whole tribe leaves the country of Haurân for the Hamâd, or Syrian Desert, which lies to the

south. Here they proceed to gather the dates for the annual store; for on this fruit they subsist almost entirely. This done, they migrate slowly into the 'Ajlûn, grazing northwards, and arrive back in Haurân again, during the month of April or a little later. While in the desert they live to a certain extent on the produce of the chase, and they told me there was an abundance of gazelles, hares, and other game. They are much given to hawking, but do not tame their own hawks, preferring to buy them from the Arabs of the Lejjah.

I noticed a fine bird sitting on the lap of the sheikh's youngest son, a boy of about twelve, and on my pointing to it, the sheikh observed, 'The hawk, when set free, rises in the air, and, perceiving his prey, swoops down on it, pecking at its eyes and holding it until the hunter comes up; but this way of hunting we do not like; we prefer rather to run down the gazelles with greyhounds, and shoot them with the gun. For therein is more pleasure; and man should kill animals with the strength of his hand.'

The Wulid 'Ali keep with them, during their migrations, herds numbering many thousands of camels; but the goats and cattle are left behind in the Jaulân, in the care of those members of the tribe who are sedentary. The Wulid 'Ali possess, further, the best Arab breed of horses. As a rule they will

not sell these, unless prices of £1,000 and more be offered; and they prefer only to part with them in the form of presents. The foals are reared on camel's milk up to their third year, and the greatest care is bestowed on them; after the third year they are fed on dates, and the best-bred mares never touch barley. On getting back to Haurân, the Wulid 'Ali cultivate some patches of ground, but they live for the most part on dates and milk, and have meat and bread only when guests are being entertained. The poorer classes of the tribe, in fact, may be said never to touch meat.

The number of the tents of the Wulid 'Ali es Smeir, as I was assured by Sheikh Muhammed, amounts to 6,000, giving from 30,000 to 35,000 souls, and the whole tribe of the 'Anazeh, I was told, numbers over 300,000. The Sheikh Muhammed is the official guide of the Mecca pilgrims, from Damascus along the Haj road, through the desert to the territories of another chief of his tribe, Ibn Râshid, who thence onwards becomes answerable for their safety as far as Mecca. For his services the Turkish Government pays Sheikh Muhammed annually 300,000 piastres; and by agreeing so to do, has put an end to the plundering which was formerly committed upon the Mecca pilgrims. He holds, therefore, a very influential position, and is a *personâ gratâ* with the Government. He is allowed to pos-

sess arms, and many an excellent rifle is to be found among his 'Aulâd.' Further, he is the implacable enemy of the Druses, whose very name suffices to excite him to wrath.

In this tribe, as, in truth, among all Bedawin, they calculate distances by lance-lengths, 'Tûl Rumeh;' the lance being considered to be about 18 feet long.

The family life of the Wulid 'Ali would seem to be patriarchal, and ruled by the promptings of natural affection. The sheikh asked me whether the 'Franji' girls were allowed to marry whom they pleased, or whether their husbands were found for them by their relatives. As I stated that liberty of choice was general among us, he turned towards the elders of the tribe, and remarked:

'See, brothers! they have the same customs as we have;' and, turning to me, added, 'Our daughters can choose as husbands whomsoever they like among the tribe.'

This is proof that, among the 'Anazeh, the women still occupy a high social position, such as was the custom of the early days of Arab history, and it would seem to show that this tribe have maintained among them the manners of their ancestors. The handsome, tall, and fair-skinned women of the Wulid 'Ali never perform the menial services which commonly fall to the lot of the women of other tribes; and no

women here ever offered us coffee or water, as constantly occurred among the Bedawin of the Jaulân. And although I would not vouch for the fact that all their females enjoy rights such as are allowed to the daughters of the sheikh and of his relations, I still believe that among the Wulid 'Ali a higher degree of civilization is to be found than among the other Arab tribes in the Jaulân.

In all minor matters the sheikh gives judgment, and against his decisions there is seldom lodged an appeal.

A case occurred while we were sitting in the tent. One of the Damascus merchants who visit the tribe, bringing for sale clothes, hardware, and provisions, such as coffee, sugar, salt, etc., came to the sheikh and made a claim against an Arab of the tribe, stating that the Bedawin had bought a mantle of him, and then changed his mind, and declined to pay for it.

Muhammed es Smeir then and there sent for the accused, and said to him:

'Ya ibni' (O my son), 'speak! have you, after buying the mantle and agreeing with this merchant about the price, and after leaving his tent with it, come back again and then declared that you have changed your mind?'

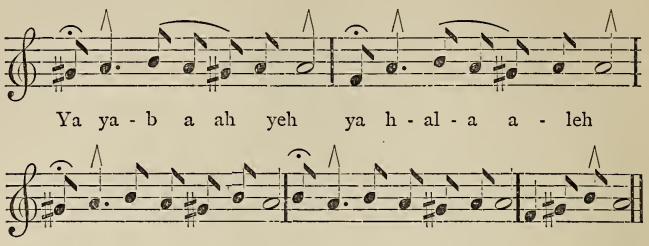
'Lâ Wallah!' (No, by Allah!), said the man; 'I changed my mind while finally looking at the thing;

then I stepped towards the opening of the tent, and under the door I gave my declaration.'

'Is it so?' inquired the sheikh of the merchant, and he replied in the affirmative. 'Then,' said the sheikh to his clansman, 'I rule that you have to pay one beshly' (beshlik, 3 piastres) 'as a fine to the merchant;' and, turning to the latter, he added, 'But you must take the mantle back, for the walad' (literally, boy) 'had decided not to purchase it before he left the tent.'

The two parties bowed and were content, for in all small matters the sheikh's authority is rarely contested among the tribe; and in this case the elders sitting round approved the judgment by each exclaiming, 'Eywah, hakk' (Yes, verily it is just). In the more important cases, however, the Turkish Government invariably interferes.

The Bedawin are extremely fond of music, and the 'Anazeh have the reputation of being poetical; but the only specimen of their musical compositions that I was able to commit to paper was the air of a song which is common among all the Bedawin of the Haurân. Walking in the caravan of camels, his mantle or sheepskin thrown over one shoulder, and an old musket or a huge stick carried on the other, the Bedawin is heard continually chanting the following monotonous song, the words of which are given below:



To return, however, to the account of my visit. After some time the sheikh ordered in food, and promptly, on a large goatskin, appeared freshly-baked bread, as white as snow; and in a huge copper dish, dates, which had been stewed in milk and then boiled in butter. First the sheikh took a piece of bread, rolled into it some dates, and proceeded to taste, a custom always observed among the Bedawin, and dictated by the desire to remove all suspicion from the mind of the guest. After this he invited us to partake of the dishes. These to our taste appeared rather sweet, but the food was extremely good of its kind, well cooked, and certainly very nutritious. After we had finished, the elders of the tribe soon disposed of what was left. Towards evening the assembly broke up, and we took our leave, the sheikh preceding us for a short distance. At parting, he gave me his hand, saying:

* The notes marked  are to be struck more forcibly, with a sort of chromatic appoggiatura from below;  indicates a short pause.

'M'a Salâmeh' (Go in peace). 'You have eaten bread and salt with me—our friendship shall last for ever! Come to our lands, come to my tent, accompany us for a year through our home which is the desert. You will always be safe, for Muhammed es Smeir with his life guarantees yours. M'a Salâmeh!'

As I left the tent of the sheikh the conviction was strong in my mind that here, truly, was a man who in natural nobility of character surpassed many nobles found in the society of a more advanced civilization. Muhammed es Smeir has no knowledge of writing or reading, but takes about with him a secretary who composes at his dictation. On making his acquaintance he said to me: 'Note my name, for we must become friends.' And when this was done, continued: 'Now give me thine. Write it plainly on a piece of paper, both in thy language and in mine, that I may keep it as a remembrance.' I complied with his wish, and he then remarked: 'Good! this is the first name of a Franji I have wished to know, the first I shall bear in mind. I have already received many travellers in my tent; but they come and go, and I forget them, and they forget me.' Later in the day he said to me: 'The Emperor of Austria gave me high decorations, and I accompanied him down to the Great Sea. He also is my friend, and he invited me to come and visit him in his Belâd' (country). 'I should like much for you to accompany me to his

residence there, to express my feelings to him even as I now express them to you. How many gold pieces would the journey cost ?'

To all his questions I answered to the best of my ability, and warmly encouraged him to realize his proposed visit to Europe.

In the behaviour of the sheikh to me there was no suspicion of covetousness or petty begging, so characteristic a trait among all the Bedawin met with throughout Western Palestine; and although I had at the time in my hands a double-barrelled gun, which was much admired by his son, and other articles prized among the Bedawin, he never even indirectly expressed any desire to possess them.

I should add that the sheikh had been informed by the Governor of Haurân that I was surveying the country, with special permission of the Government, in order to find the best line along which a railway might be laid between Haifa and Damascus. This may have influenced his conduct; but, on the other hand, it might have been expected that he, who well knew that such a work must eventually deprive him of his grazing-grounds, would have tried to obstruct the matter as much as possible. The question was of course discussed, but his remark to me was this:

'I see well that with the great iron road we cannot remain long in Haurân; but we know that this country is not for ever to be ours, for we have

heard how the descendants of those, whose bones lie under the ruins of this land, are to come back and rebuild once more its cities, even as they were in the times of their forefathers ;' and then after a pause he added, ' But we will retire to the 'Ajlûn, where there is place yet enough for our tribe. Allah yebârik !' (May Allah's blessing be on it !)

The Bedawin show a great partiality for all strong odours, and it is curious to note that they employ as their favourite perfume the droppings of gazelles, which they pick up and carry in their pockets. I am bound to acknowledge also that an Arab thus perfumed is in truth more fragrant than he would be in his natural condition. When, however, as a special compliment to a guest, a handful of these contents of the pocket is suddenly thrust under the nose of the inexperienced European, the latter is apt to feel that this mark of Bedawin politeness is of a nature that would preferably be dispensed with.

'Amrâwah.—A village, the houses of which are built of mud and stone. It is as large as Jamleh ; at present unexplored. It is in South-Western Haurân.

'Ain el Mallâhah.—Two springs in the Wâdy Zeidy, lying to the north of Ed Dera'ah. The water is brackish, and is only used for giving to camels and mules. There are two broken sarcophagi lying near the more eastern spring of the two, which are now used as water-troughs. The supply is not very

plentiful; at the watering of the herds there are continual quarrels and much shouting among the camel-drivers who come down to the spring, hence for a philologist it would be an excellent place in which to collect the amenities of Arab parlance.

'Ain et Tawîleh is another spring situated south of Ed Dera'ah, giving excellent water with a plentiful supply.

El 'Amurîyeh.—The name of a considerable pile of ruins lying close to the southern borders of the Wâdy el Ehreir. There are traces of buildings, and all around are large weather-worn building-stones.

El 'Ajamy.—A miserable village on the southern borders of the Ehreir. It contains some thirty partly abandoned huts, built of mud and stone. On the east stands a well-arched gate of modern masonry, which was formerly the entrance to the sheikh's yard. There are now but twelve of the houses inhabited, and the miserable-looking population, amounting to about thirty souls in all, are a pitiful sight. The place was very flourishing during the times of the Sheikh el 'Ajamy, a Muhammedan saint, much respected in the country round. To the west of the village is his tomb or makâm, a rectangular building of modern construction, very dirty, which is covered with a collection of coloured rags, fastened with sticks into the wall by those who come here to seek a cure for their maladies. The place is surrounded by a

miserable garden, on the produce of which the few inhabitants and the warden of the makâm live. It is watered by a muddy stream running through the *Wâdy el 'Ajamy*, which rises immediately south of the village, in the marsh called *Bahret el 'Ajamy*. This brackish and unwholesome swamp, being the only source from which the inhabitants can obtain drinking water, is without doubt the cause of their sickly condition. I was told that the people often died of fever in the autumn, and that children, it was found, could not stand the climate. During the worst seasons the people migrate to other settlements. The remains of ruins are scanty in the village, but in the neighbourhood we found scattered about many ancient stones. The name of the village is modern, hardly older than the present century.

'Ain en Nîleh.—A good spring, of moderate supply, at the Khurbet en Nîleh.

'Ain el Lubwah.—An abundant spring, which gives a perennial stream of water at Deir el Lubwah. Below, it runs through the Wâdy el Lubwah.

'Arab en Nu'êm.—A large Bedawin tribe, whose grazing-grounds lie to the north of those of the 'Anazeh.

'Adwân.—A moderate-sized village, tolerably well built of stone and mud, situated on a low elevation, west of Sheikh Sa'ad. It contains about 40 huts, with a population of about 140 souls. There are

near it some ruins. Its present name is modern, and is derived from the 'Adwân Bedawin, who formerly occupied this part of the country.

'Ain er Rumashtah.—An ancient tank, surrounded by excellent masonry, 40 feet square and 14 feet deep, counting from the level of the water. It is situated in the centre of Nawâ. From it the inhabitants of Nawâ for the most part get their drinking water; but it is very dirty, for, being open, it is often used as a bathing-place. Still the taste of the water is not bad, except for a slight flavour. The water is obtained with pails or jars let down with a rope. I was told that the birket is supplied by a subterranean spring, probably through a canal; and the statement is likely to be true, for the large amount of water found here in September could not have been merely that left by the rains.

Bahret el Bajjeh.—The lake of El Mezeirîb, described above—see Wâdy el Bajjeh (p. 27).

Bahret Zeizûn is formed by the stream of the Moyet Zeizûn, and divides the village of Zeizûn into its two quarters.

Bahret el 'Ajamy.—The marsh at El 'Ajamy.

Bahret el Ash'ary.—A marsh near Tell el Ash'ary. See below.

Bendak.—The site of an anciently inhabited place on the Wâdy el Bajjeh. The remains consist of scattered stones.

Bintuh.—A deserted village near Tsîl, with some remains of ruins.

Ed Dera'ah.—This is the chief town and the seat of government of the Kaimakamîyeh. It consists of stone houses and mud huts; but there are very few good buildings to be seen, the Serâyah and the house of Sheikh Naif being the best. A new Government building was, however, just being commenced, which will be superior in size to any at present there. Ed Dera'ah is the largest town in this district, and, I believe, the largest in Haurân. According to the statements of the Government officials there, it contains over 3,000 adult males; and, though my personal observations would hardly let me vouch for this high figure, I should judge that a total population of 4,000 to 5,000 souls would not be an exaggerated estimate. Nevertheless, it is a miserable-looking place, very muddy in wet weather, and so dirty and dusty in summer that the eyes suffer while walking through the streets. These are for the most part wide. The mud and dust come from the great mounds of ashes which are piled up outside the houses. Everywhere are the ruins of ancient buildings and modern huts which have been abandoned, and are now fallen to decay. The building-stones used are, without exception, ancient, and the elevated site of the present city is entirely due to the debris of ancient buildings on which it stands. In

ancient times it must have occupied a lower level, as is shown by the position of the ruins. The Sûk or market is poor; there are no regular stores—merely some few mud huts, and the canvas tents of the Damascus merchants who sell provisions and vegetables.

The village consists of two quarters. The main portion is built on a flat piece of ground, enclosed on the east and west by the dry Wâdy *Z*eidy, and on the south by a valley, formed by a spur of the *Z*umleh Hills. On the north it is separated by a sort of depression from *Karak*, the other portion of the city, which is situated on a round hill, and stands a little higher than the main village. The road from El Mezeirîb passes along a narrow neck due north of the town.

Coming from El Mezeirîb by way of El Yedûdeh, the road runs through a fertile and well-cultivated plain, where the regularity of the patches into which the plain is divided does not fail to strike the eye. Furrows of a mile and more in length run from north to south in lines which are admirably straight; and hardly any stones are to be seen on the reddish-brown soil, formed by decomposed volcanic ashes, which feels, when rubbed between the fingers, very like sand. The whole country round is most fertile.

Traversing the plain, the road rises gradually, and about 2 miles north of Ed Dera'ah passes the

summit of a range of low hills. From this point, Ed Dera'ah appears in view as a collection of low, squalid-looking huts, among which rises the *Mêdany*, a high tower, of ancient masonry. An arm of the Wâdy *Z*eidy is first crossed, and then we arrive at the *Kanât Fara'ûn*. This is an ancient aqueduct, with a water-tower standing a little off it to the north. It originally went as far as Dilly, a place on the Haj road to Damascus, in the Wâdy el Ehreir, from whence the water was brought to Ed Dera'ah. But the aqueduct is now in ruins, and carries no water; the village consequently is very badly off for its supply, the inhabitants having now to go to the two springs of 'Ain el Mallâhah in the Wâdy *Z*eidy. These, however, are brackish and of very moderate yield; and the 'Ain et Tawîleh, to the south of the village, which they also use, although plentiful, is hardly enough so to supply the whole population. The aqueduct originally crossed the Wâdy *Z*eidy by a stone bridge of five semicircular arches, which have a span of 16 feet 6 inches, and are about 15 feet from the crown to the ground below. The total length of the bridge is 165 feet, and its width 17 feet 6 inches. It originally carried a paved road 13 feet 2 inches wide, running on the west side, for foot-passengers; while the actual aqueduct, on the east side, was elevated 4 feet 9 inches above the roadway, and was 4 feet 4 inches wide. Here

cylindrical pipes of pottery were laid in white mortar. Up-stream, the bridge-piers have pointed starlings.

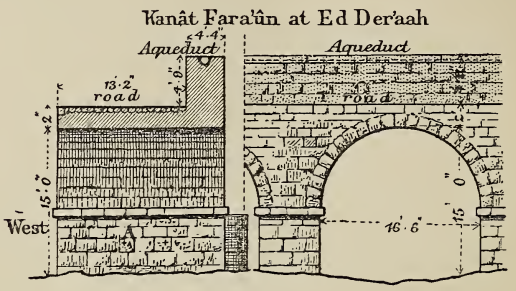


FIG. 49.

The bridge is only partially ruined, and is used by passengers for crossing the Wâdy *Z*eidy, although this last is dry in summer. The construction is of a later date than are the building-stones used in it. These have been originally hewn with great care, and are of considerable size, being 3 and 4 feet long, 1 foot 5 inches and 2 feet high. On them are some inscriptions, now found upside down in the interior of the arches (as, for instance, at the point marked A in Fig. 49), but which are for the most part so weatherworn that no complete specimen could be copied. The characters are apparently Greek and Arabic, and many are marked with crosses (Fig. 50). The monogram ⲓⲛ often occurs (possibly 'Jesus Nazarenus'). Stones with mouldings, having an appearance of dating from Roman times, are also

built into the walls. So little skill, however, is shown in the construction that I am inclined to

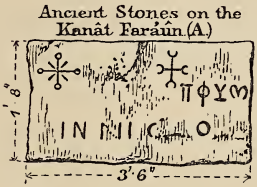


FIG. 50.

believe the bridge to be, comparatively speaking, modern, the building stones alone dating from the early Christian era. A little east of the bridge, on

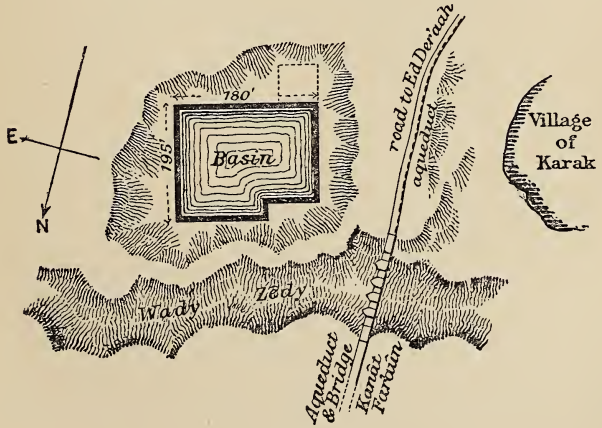


FIG. 51.

the southern bank of the Wâdy Zeidy, is a tank, the sides of which have been faced with squared stones (Fig. 51). It is 65 yards long and about 60 yards wide, and still 7 feet deep, though its bottom is

covered with rubbish and mud, and its sides are now ruined. The tank is situated in a natural depression of the ground, and a bank separates it from the wâdy; it must, therefore, have been fed by a side channel from the aqueduct. About 100 yards south-east of this tank is an opening which leads into the caves, to be described further on, but which at present is entirely blocked up with straw. The banks of the Wâdy *Z*eidy, near Ed Dera'ah, consist of a very soft limestone; they are full of natural caverns, and more especially is this the case with the hill on which Karak is built. They are used as shelter for the herds, and as store-places for straw and other provisions. The aqueduct, after crossing the wâdy, leads south over a narrow neck east of Karak and thence to the city, originally supplying here a large basin 130 yards long and 90 yards wide, with a depth averaging 25 feet, and well lined with masonry. On the western side of this tank, or birket, stands the *Hummâm Siknâny* (Fig. 52), a ruined, spherically-vaulted building, evidently an ancient Roman bath, as is proved by the construction and the pipes which conducted the water from the roof of the building into the interior. The masonry is good and laid in white mortar; the surrounding walls are 20 feet high. A part of the building is now occupied by Fellahîn, who have made a hut in one of the niches. These men informed me that a short

time ago the building was in perfect preservation, and the interior arrangements were those which they remembered to have seen at the Hammâms of Acca, to which city they now and then bring their grain. To the east of this Hammâm is a well-built chamber in good preservation, the roof of which is on a level with the surrounding ground and the floor of the Hammâm, while its walls are in part those of the ancient water-basin. The entrance to this chamber, which is called by the name *Siknâny*, and is said

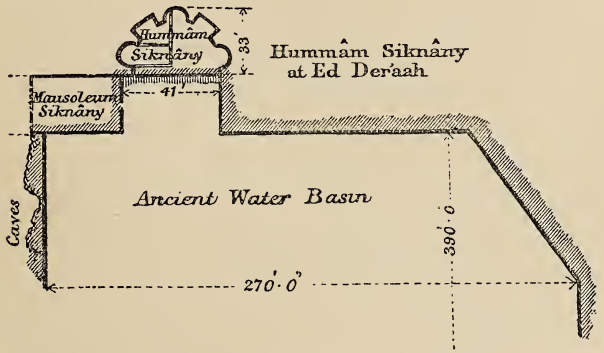


FIG. 52.

by the natives to have been a mausoleum, is from the south side of the basin (see plan). By getting down on to the manure and rubbish which covers the whole of the bottom of the tank—for the spot at present serves as a place into which they shoot ashes and all sorts of refuse—this entrance could be reached and the interior explored, were it not for a gigantic heap which has been placed here probably with the

express view of blocking this entry, and which it would take days of labour to remove. Near this straw heap are many natural caves opening towards the bottom of the basin, but they were too low to permit of our making any exploration of them. From them, possibly, there is a communication through to the mausoleum. The Fellahîn, as usual, state that great treasures are hid in this underground place, but they have never explored it, and it would form an interesting object for the investigation of some future traveller. As the door of the mausoleum must, at the time when the basin was yet supplied with water, have been submerged, we may conclude that it dates from an earlier age than do the aqueduct and the basin, and probably, like the Hammâm, is of Roman construction. Both Hammâm and mausoleum are situated on the level ground between the city and Karak, but are separated from the latter by a depression in the ground.

Continuing along the high road, after passing some considerable heaps of manure and ashes, we enter the village proper of Ed Dera'ah, and arrive at the *Mêdany*, the *Jâm'aah*, and the *Kenîseh*, which are ruins all standing near together. The *Kenîseh* (church) lies to the south. It is now a total ruin, about 40 yards long. The walls, standing 8 feet high, still show the circular apse which was at its southern extremity. The capitals, columns, and hewn stones which were

used in its construction were doubtless originally brought from a building called the Jâm'aah, a more modern edifice which adjoins the Kenîseh on the north.

This Jâma'ah is still used as a mosque, and was

The Mosque or Ej Jâm'aah in the Northern part of Ed Der'aah.

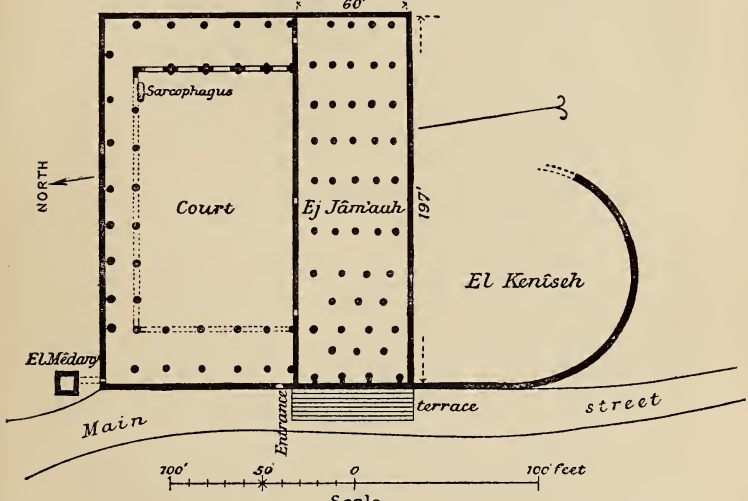


FIG. 53.

recently restored by the Wâly of Syria on the occasion of a visit to Ed Dera'ah. No part of the edifice can be very old. Roman mouldings are built into its walls upside down, and blocks bearing Greek and Arabic inscriptions have been set in positions for which they were never originally intended. Along the foot of the western wall, stones are laid to form a

terrace of steps; but as there is no sign of there having ever been an entrance here, these steps must have been designed to serve in some way as a strengthening buttress for that portion of the wall where it faces the main street. The present entrance is to the left of the steps, and leads, as is usual in mosques, directly into the courtyard. The *Jâm'aah* itself contains forty-seven columns, placed in rows, three, four, and five together, occupying a rectangular chamber 197 feet long and 60 feet broad. The columns support round arches which spring from a variety of Corinthian and Ionic capitals, set on the



FIG. 54.

columns without any regard for symmetry; and there are no bases. The columns themselves are only 4 feet 4 inches high; the space from the crown of the arch to the paved floor being 10 feet 10 inches. The arrangement, therefore, of the interior presents an appearance at once crowded and stunted, and it has no pretension to architectural style. With the exception of two of the columns, which are of white marble, all are of basalt; and all but one, which is shown in Fig. 54, are smooth. From the Jâm'aah

two entrances on the north lead directly into the paved court, while a third, also to the north, opens into the arched colonnade which surrounds this court on its northern, eastern, and western sides. The colonnade, supported by a double row of pillars, thirty-eight in number, resembles those in the Jâm'aah. These also have been recently restored. On the walls of the court are several Arab inscriptions, and the following two in Greek I noticed on stones built in, as usual, upside down (Fig. 55):

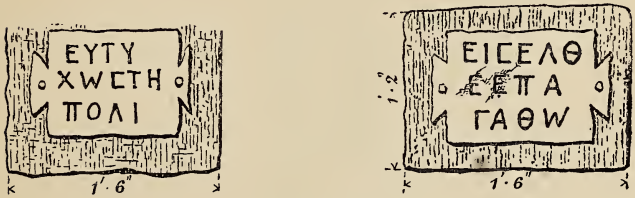


FIG. 55.

In the northern part of the court there lies a sarcophagus, 7 feet 6 inches long, bearing on one of its longer sides three roughly carved objects in high relief. These, at the present day, are much worn, but bear some resemblance to lions' heads.

From the north-west corner of the court a partly ruined door leads into the *Mêdany* (minaret), which rises to the north of the Jâm'aah. This Mêdany is a rectangular tower, built of basalt without mortar, and has a height of about 60 feet (Fig. 56). Its

lower portion consists of a stylobate 12 feet 6 inches square, ornamented with simple mouldings, with an opening on the one side. Above this rises the actual tower, which has the shape of a truncated pyramid, the summit being surrounded by a cornice, which projects several feet, and is supported by corbels. In the middle of each of the four walls of the tower are large rectangular openings, now much

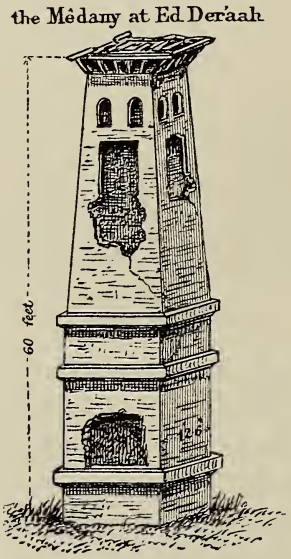


FIG. 56.

broken away, and above each of these again are two small round-arched windows. The interior of the tower is hollow, but now filled, up to a considerable

height, with rubbish. Such towers as this, built in the form of a truncated pyramid, with projecting cornice, are not uncommon in Haurân. They are generally raised on cube-shaped bases, and taper upwards, but sometimes they have the form of a simple truncated pyramid without any pedestal, as in the one mentioned in the description of Sahem ej Jaulân (p. 98). There is usually one opening in the lower part, and above, in the tower, one or two windows, rectangular or conical in shape, surmounted by round or pointed arches. Some towers are plain, without mouldings or cornices (see below, under Tuffas), and occasionally the pedestal consists of rows of low columns supporting the upper tower (see under Tsîl). Whether these originally were church-towers or mosque-minarets it is not easy now to decide. It seems evident, however, that they are not of Roman origin; and on the other hand they are always found by the side of a building devoted to religious purposes. They do not, however, form part of the general plan of the church or mosque, but are built on the opposite side of the courtyard to the main edifice. The fragments of Roman ornamentation and mouldings which are placed in the walls of these towers without order or method, would seem to prove that they have been built, or at any rate rebuilt, since the time of the Muhammedan occupation, for the purpose of

minarets. The Mêdany of Ed Dera'ah is one of the best preserved specimens found in the Haurân; but its cornice-slabs, and the stones forming the flat roof, are already loose and in a dangerous condition.

To the south of the Jâm'aah, after passing along dusty streets, heaped with rubbish, and between ruined huts and modern carelessly built dwellings,

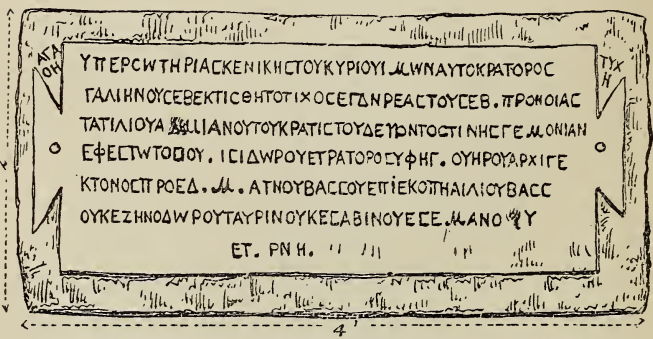


FIG. 57.

we come to the Serâyah, or Government Office. This is a modern stone house, well-built, of two stories, in the courtyard of which are some Roman mouldings; and also a stone bearing a long Greek inscription, which the Kaimakâm informed me had been recently discovered and brought here from the yard of the house of Sheikh Naif, who is the head of an old and influential family in Ed Dera'ah (Fig. 57)

The stone on which this inscription is found is

about to be used as a lintel, to be set over the door of the new Serâyah, a building just commenced alongside of the older edifice.

Sheikh Naif was now sent for to conduct us through the curious underground city of Ed Dera'ah, first discovered and partially described by Consul Wetzstein (see his 'Reisebericht über den Haurân und die Trachonen,' Berlin, 1860), but which apparently has not been since visited or explored by any other traveller. The entrance of this underground city lies

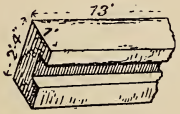


FIG. 58.

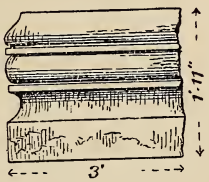


FIG. 59.

at the extreme east of Ed Dera'ah, near the border of the Wâdy Zeidy, and a little to the east of the Serâyah. There is a small court, 26 feet long and 8 feet 3 inches wide, with steps leading down into it, which has been built as an approach to the actual entrance of the caves; and lying about here are several large basalt slabs, one of them 13 feet long, 2 feet 4 inches wide, and 1 foot thick, with a groove in it for the stone gate (Fig. 58), also several mouldings (Fig. 59), and part of the spring of an arch, with

a Greek inscription cut on the frieze, some words of which can still be read (Fig. 60). These remains seem to point to there having stood here an arched gateway leading to the entrance of the subterranean city. The court is surrounded by walls built of stones without mortar. To the south of it, judging from the remains of a wall, a large building must



FIG. 60.

have stood (Fig. 61). On the north side a few easy steps lead down to the yard, which is at present covered with mud and rubbish, and lies about 11 feet below the surface of the ground. We now

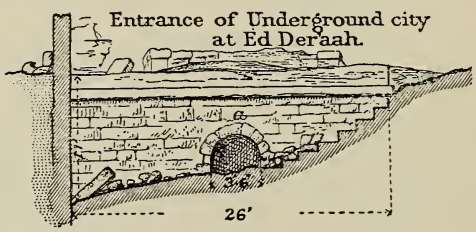
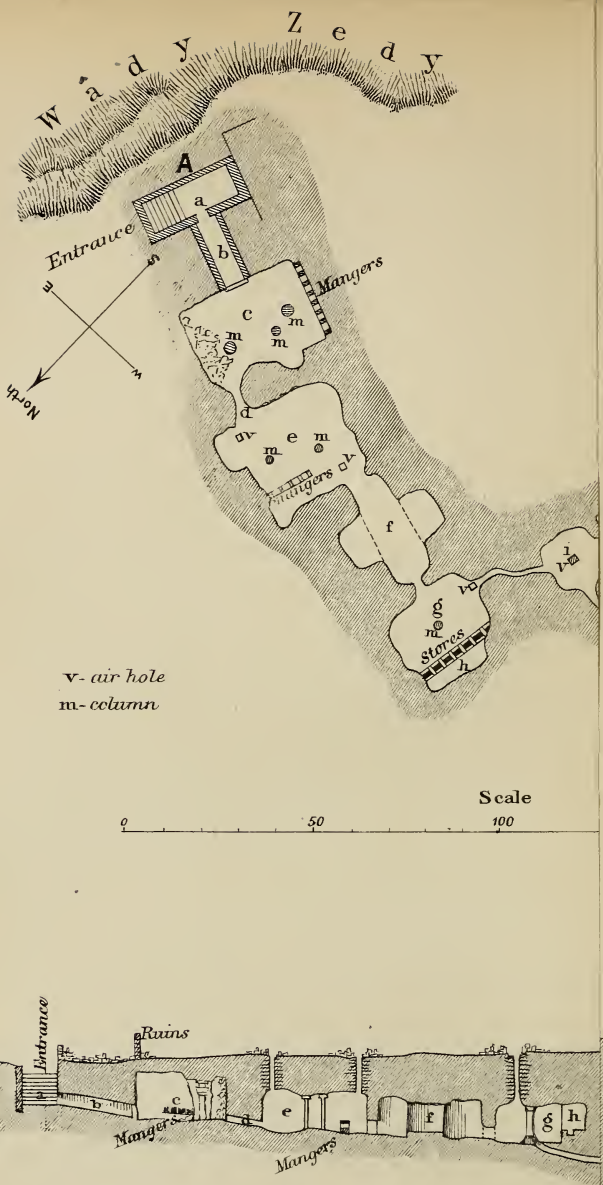


FIG. 61.

observed on the right an arched entrance, 3 feet 6 inches wide, just high enough for a man to crawl through on hands and knees, and after tying the


Wady Zedy
A
a
b
Entrance
Mangers
c
m
d
e
f
g
h
Stones
North
v- air hole
m- column
Scale
0
50
100
Entrance
Ruins
Mangers
Mangers
Mangers

end of a ball of string to a stone at the entrance (a precautionary measure that should on no account be neglected by any future explorer), we lighted our candles and proceeded to crawl through this opening (*a*) and along a low, muddy corridor (*b*) (see plan of the underground city, Fig. 62).

This passage is 20 feet long and 4 feet wide, and sloping down, leads west into a rectangular room (*c*) 33 feet by 23, which is shut off from the corridor (*b*) by a stone door set in a frame of the same material. This door is 4 feet 4 inches broad, 3 feet 3 inches high, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, and still turns on its hinges (see Fig. 63). The underground city

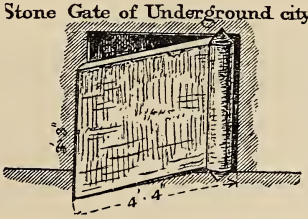


FIG. 63.

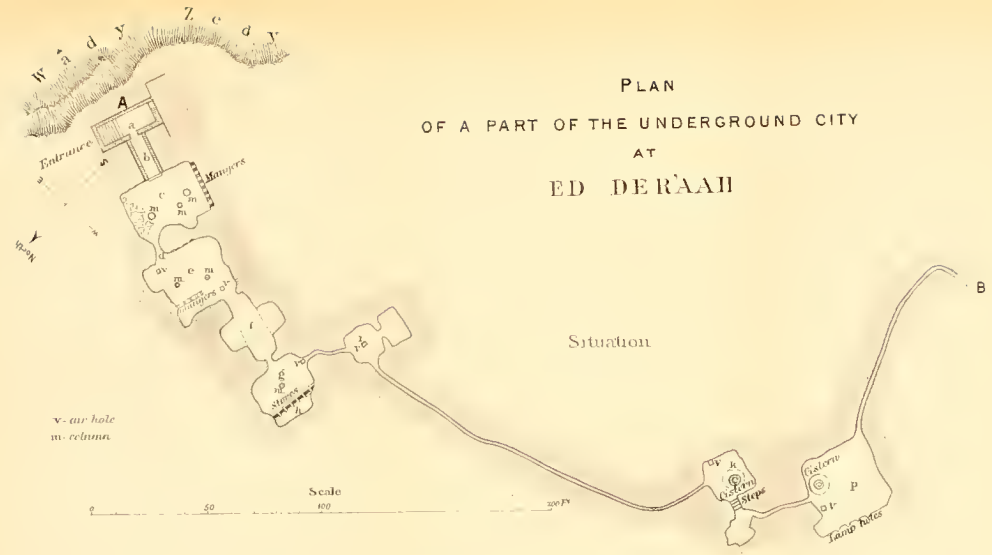
was thus shut off and guarded from the outside world. Some of the Government officials who had proposed to accompany me, were here beset with terrors, and went out again, but the Kaimakâm's son and several officers remained. The first room (*c*) is evidently an artificial cavern, and its walls and ceiling show remains of ancient plaster-work,

PLAN

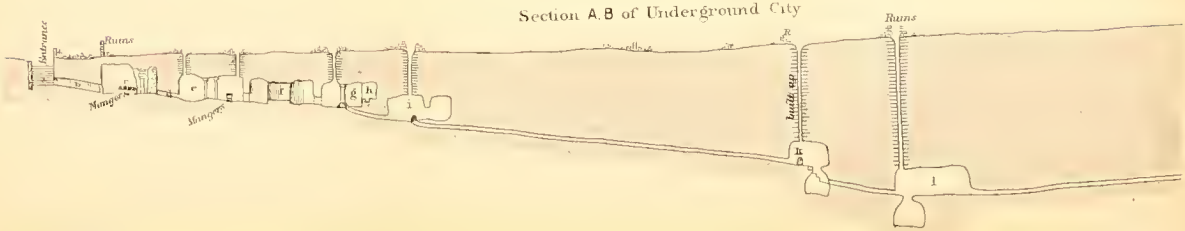
OF A PART OF THE UNDERGROUND CITY

AT

ED DER'AAH



Section A.B of Underground City



but the mortar mixed with coarse sand used in its composition is now disintegrating rapidly and falling away.

Nowhere was any ornamentation to be discovered. The natural roof is formed of thin layers of flint stones, alternating with the crumbling, soft, white limestone, which is the rock in which the underground city has been burrowed. Owing to the dampness of the surface soil and the manure-heaps

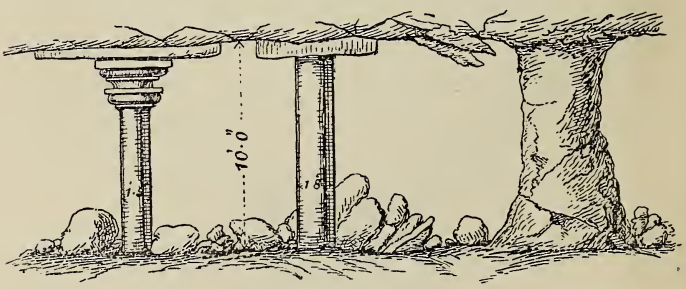


FIG. 64.

piled up thereon, nitrates, in the water percolating through, decompose the limestone, and it falls in. In some parts of the great caves great masses of flint and stone are constantly coming down. This is a source of considerable danger, and the heap of rubbish already piled up in the western part of chamber *c* is thus being constantly added to. The superincumbent mass has often been met by erecting columns 10 feet or less high, and from 1 foot 8 inches to 1 foot 5 inches in diameter, each of which carries

a sort of abacus in the form of a slab of basalt, and this supports the ceiling (Fig. 64). Such columns must have been added long after the first construction of the caves, probably in Roman times, since the mouldings are Roman in character; for it seems probable that these underground cities are the work of the earliest inhabitants of Haurân, the so-called 'Giants' of Scripture. Natural supports to the ceiling, hewn from the living rock, at the period of the first construction of the cave, are also found. They are of a curious and original character, but are now in process of rapid disintegration, and soon will fail to serve the purpose for which they were designed.

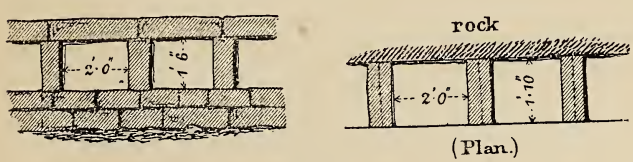


FIG. 65.

To the south of the room *c* mangers have been constructed in the masonry of the wall. The apertures are 2 feet wide, and 1 foot 6 inches high, divided each from the other by single stones (Fig. 65). Here and there also in the walls at a height of 5 and 6 feet from the floor, are circular holes, 6 to 8 inches in diameter, which were most likely used for lamps (Fig. 66). The present average height of

this chamber of the underground city is from 12 to 10 feet, and less; but it must originally have been more lofty. The floor is damp, and in the passages where manure from above has fallen down through the air-holes, the smell is extremely disagreeable; however, there is still a sufficient quantity of fresh air in most of the chambers for breathing purposes. The room *c*, and the next, are used by Sheikh Naif, who claims to be proprietor of part of the subterranean Dera'ah, as a store-place for straw and as a shelter for his flocks; but as the entrance at *a* is getting more and more choked up with rubbish, the animals are now seldom brought in. From the room *c*, which seems to have been at one time faced with



FIG. 66.

masonry, a short narrow passage *d* through the western wall, barely 2 feet wide, leads into a second large room *e*, of rectangular shape, and of about the same size as *c*. Here columns of basalt support the ceiling, and there are mangers not unlike those in *c*, while two apertures in the ceiling, for air, lead up to the surface of the ground. These holes are 2 feet square, and the shaft is lined with stones. After

about 20 feet they come out on the ground above, where round each aperture is a ruined wall, which suggests the notion that these air-holes were originally protected by buildings, since naturally life in this underground city would entirely depend upon these air-holes being kept clear. The floor of the room *e* is covered with rubbish, hewn and unhewn stones, fragments of columns, with mouldings similar to those in *c*, and much manure fallen down through the air-holes. From the western part of *e* is a passage communicating with another room *f*, which in plan has the form of a cross; for there are alcoves each about 9 feet square leading out of four sides of the central room, which measures 17 feet square. The floor of these recesses is a little raised above that of the central part. Wetzstein supposes that such recesses were used for storage purposes.

Leaving the room *f*, we immediately pass to a smaller square-shaped chamber *g*, the ceiling of which is supported in the centre by a column. In the wall opposite the entrance coming from *f*, about 2 feet above the floor, there is a recess *h* worked in the rock, at the bottom of which are scooped out a row of troughs, 2 and 3 feet long, 1 foot 5 inches wide, and about a foot deep. The ceiling of *h* is equal in height to that of the main room *g*. These troughs are hardly large enough

to be loculi under an arcosolium, and more probably have been merely store-places for grain.

On the south an air-hole supplies the room with ventilation, but is now stopped above. Just under it a low and narrow passage, some 20 feet long, leads into the chamber *i*, 14 feet square, cut out in the soft limestone rock, and from its ceiling an air-hole leads up to the surface. On the south of chamber *i* a rectangular room, 14 feet by 11, has been formed, separated from it by a rock wall; a square doorway forms the communication between the two chambers. Through the western wall of room *i* we crawled on our hands and knees along a passage sloping slightly downwards and turning at the end sharp to the left, which is barely 2 feet high and 1 foot 6 inches



FIG. 67.

wide. After following this along 165 feet, and becoming much exhausted by the constrained position and the want of air, we finally arrived at a chamber *k*, 18 feet square. On the left of the entrance an air-hole, partly filled up with rubbish and manure, about 2 feet 4 inches square, and built up with masonry like the rest, goes up through the ceiling to the surface of the earth, through a distance measuring certainly

not less than 50 feet. In the middle of the floor of the room is a cistern, with a circular opening about a yard across, and bottle-shaped within (Fig. 67), now partly filled up with mud, but still over 12 feet deep. Going on through the side opposite to the air-hole, down four steps, we came to an irregular-shaped room, begun, but apparently never completed; and after passing this, turned to the left, through an extremely low and narrow passage sloping downwards again for about 30 feet, and entered the chamber *l*, which is the largest of any we found, measuring 33 feet square and 10 feet high. In the wall near the entrance an alcove has been scooped, and in the western wall are circular holes 6 inches in diameter, probably intended, like those in chamber *c*, to receive oil-lamps. In the floor near the entrance, there is a cistern very similar to that found in chamber *k*, and to the east, above it, an air-hole in the ceiling goes up, through about 60 feet, to the surface of the ground, but is now partly filled in with mud and rubbish.

Down to the point to which we had now penetrated, there had been, in the chambers, a tolerably good supply of air, but the passages always having a downward slope, the chambers, as we went on, were each found to be on a lower level, so that in this last one, *l*, we found ourselves at a depth of about 70 feet below the surface. The air here, after some

moments, became so bad that it was only by strong persuasion that I could keep my guide with me. He had long since wished to go back and declared that no earthly being had ever penetrated before as far as this. Many of the Government officials had retired some time before this, and those who had accompanied me were now nearly frightened to death by a roaring noise which proceeded from the cistern in chamber *l*, and resembled the cry of a wild-cat; but, being unarmed, they were afraid of returning alone. In spite of their earnest entreaties, I, however, determined to make an effort at forcing my way through the farther passage. It was of the exact size of my body, but I managed to crawl for over 80 feet along the smooth, slightly-rising tunnel; at this point it turned sharp to the right, and at a right angle, and became so narrow that I actually stuck, and the atmosphere being now insupportable, I had promptly to retire.

In this passage I found human bones (no skull) in great quantities, well preserved, and of the ordinary size. These lay scattered about in no particular order, and therefore, I imagine, had been brought here by wild beasts. There were also some bones of the camel. The return journey from chamber *l* was not less trying than had been the advance; and the Kaimakâm's son, a young lieutenant, who had followed me a short distance into the last pas-

sage, and had seen the human bones, now so alarmed the others by his report that they all began to lose their heads, and rushed helter-skelter for the upper entrance. This fortunately was easily reached by means of the clue afforded by the end of the ball of string which we had kept with us.

It may be well to warn future explorers to keep a sharp look-out for the cisterns in the floors of the chambers: these are dangerous traps, and if not observed are likely enough to lead to a disaster. I was assured by the Sheikh Naif, and by many others, that this underground city extends below the whole of Ed Dera'ah, and that there are several other openings into it, now for the most part filled in with rubbish. Many of the chambers we explored will doubtless before long be choked by the mud falling down through the air-holes. I may mention that I feel convinced that the part we visited was not the same as that described by Consul Wetzstein, for it differs in many points from the description of what he saw.

This remarkable subterranean city was presumably hollowed out to receive the population of the upper town in times of danger; and the people were thus prepared to stand a siege on the part of the enemy for as long as their magazines were filled with food, their stables with cattle, and the cisterns with water. If, however, the enemy had found out how to cut off

their supply of air, by covering up the air-holes, the besieged would without doubt forthwith have been compelled to surrender or perish.

I believe that the last chamber I visited, namely *l*, lies at the maximum depth of the underground city, for the passage partly explored, leading from it, no longer slopes downwards, but has a level bottom with some short ascents. The city had thus its lowest level at a point about 70 feet below the surface of the earth, and from this point its chambers and streets rose towards the various exits. Had I

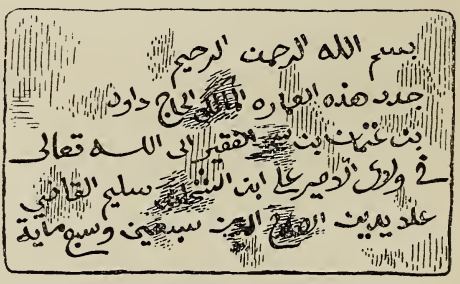


FIG. 68.

been able to go on, down the last passage, some distance further, I must eventually have arrived at the brink of the Wâdy Zeidy, along the banks of which the part of the underground city I explored has been excavated.

In a northern direction from the entrance at *a*, and along the Wâdy Zeidy, are the remains of an ancient city wall; and here over a modern gateway

is a stone bearing a partly effaced Arabic inscription, with the date 770 A.H., or about 1369 A.D. (Fig. 68).

While walking along the streets I noted what appeared to be mason-marks on many of the stones:

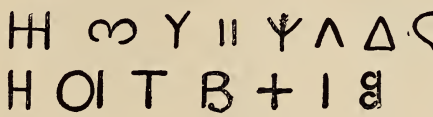


FIG. 69.

they are given in Fig. 69. Ornamental mouldings, presumably Roman, were on the lintels above some

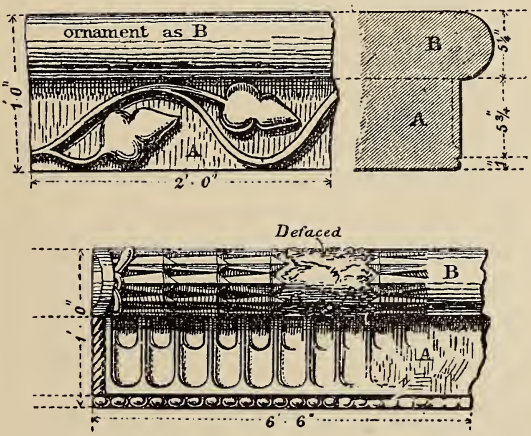


FIG. 70.

of the doors of the modern houses. Fig. 70 shows specimens of these. There was also a broken stone with part of an Arabic inscription in high relief

(Fig. 72), and a cruciform ornamentation (Fig. 71) occurred on some of the blocks.



FIG. 71.

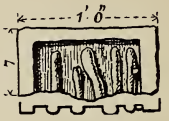


FIG. 72.

Beyond the parts described above I was unable to explore at Ed Dera'ah, and without doubt there is still much left to be investigated by some future visitor. Ed Dera'ah may, I think, be identified with the ancient capital of Bashan and the residence of King Og, and I make no doubt that a little excavation would yield a rich harvest of discovery. But as the ostensible object of my journey was merely to map the country for a railway, my researches could not be thorough, and the foregoing can only be considered as a preliminary survey of the many objects of interest which may be found here.

Ed Dukkakîn.—The stores of El Mezeirîb (see El Mezeirîb).

Dâ'el.—A village lying north-east of Tuffas, with a curious ancient tower or Mêdany. Unexplored.

Darb el Haj.—The high road of the Mecca pilgrims, commencing at Damascus. It is broad and level, and in the first part running between Nawâ and Turrah is stoneless. With but little

alteration it would, during the summer months, be available for wheeled vehicles.

Deir el Lubwah.—A miserable village consisting of a few stone huts, not permanently occupied. Extensive ruins scattered about show that the place was the site of an ancient city. A good spring, the 'Ain el Lubwah, is near it.

Dolmens.—The dolmens of Western Haurân lie a short distance outside, and to the west of the large village of Tsîl. The ground these monuments occupy is a tract elevated about 10 feet above the surrounding country, which slopes gradually down towards the south. Like the land near 'Ain Dakkar it is covered with volcanic mounds, from which the great slabs were taken for the construction of the dolmens; but the mounds in this part are less high than are those in the neighbourhood of the Jisrs of the 'Allân and Rukkâd. The necropolis, which extends from Tsîl to the Jisr el 'Allân, a distance of a mile and half, with an average breadth, from north to south, of about 200 yards, covers an area of about 120 acres. Originally it extended further south again, as is seen by the now isolated slabs lying scattered about the cultivated land. A peculiarity in the appearance of this dolmen-field, and in which it differs from that previously described, under the name of the Kubûr Beni Israîl, is that we meet here with lines of rude stones, set up in straight rows among the

dolmens. They are formed of unhewn slabs about a yard high, and from their position bear the appearance of having been placed here by the hand of man. The rows vary from 10 to 30 yards long, and even more. There are two which run in the direction from west-north-west to east-south-east, in parallel lines, about 15 feet apart; but it may be a question whether this avenue of stones is not simply a continuation of the Roman road from the Jisr el 'Allân to Tsîl. However, I am inclined to think that we have here some of the rude-stone monuments, described by Captain C. R. Conder in his 'Heth and Moab' (chap. vii., p. 196, ff. sub. 1), and by him held to be alignments or avenues. The question is the more difficult to decide upon as the Fellahîn of Tsîl now cultivate a part of the dolmen-field, and, in doing so, have somewhat upset the original plan; for every now and then they have transferred a stone from its original place to one where it would better serve their purpose.

At the western end of the dolmen-field, close to the 'Allân, there is a mound called *Rujm el Kheleif*, covered with rude blocks of basalt. If the above-described avenue were carried on, it would lead exactly to this mound, and this would tend to confirm the view that we have here a sacred hill, to which conducted an 'avenue of approach,' as described in Captain Conder's work (p. 206). Similar circles

of huge basaltic blocks were also found near Jamleh and in Western Jaulân. In general plan, the dolmens near Tsîl were similar to those of the Kubûr Beni Israîl; but the specimens are not nearly so well preserved, owing to the efforts at cultivation which have invaded the ruins. Each dolmen here occupies an elevation, but whether this, originally, was artificially terraced or not cannot now be decided. The side-stones are rudely set, as are those at 'Ain Dakkar; the head-stones have a thickness of from 2 feet to 2 feet 3 inches, and are 6 feet 6 inches and more square. These blocks had apparently been left in their natural shape, and we found no headings on the covering slabs, as was noticed to be the case with those at 'Ain Dakkar. The dolmen chambers seem to be of the same size and shape as those of the Kubûr Beni Israîl, and, like them, in their main axis had the direction of west to east. Most of the dolmens found near Tsîl are now fallen in and ruined. In a few cases, the upper slab still covers the western part of the chamber, and the side-stones are often *in situ*. These last are smaller in size than are those found at 'Ain Dakkar, and consequently greater in number, four, five, and six on each of the long sides (Fig. 73).

As in no case is there a second covering-slab found lying near, it would seem probable that there never existed more than one; and the fact that it

is invariably placed over the western end of the chamber, and that the side-stones extend several feet beyond it in an easterly direction, would lead to the supposition that, instead of marking the upper part by headings (as in the dolmens at the Kubûr Beni Israîl), here this was shown by the covering-slab itself. For it was placed over the more honoured part of the body, the head and chest, which, being at

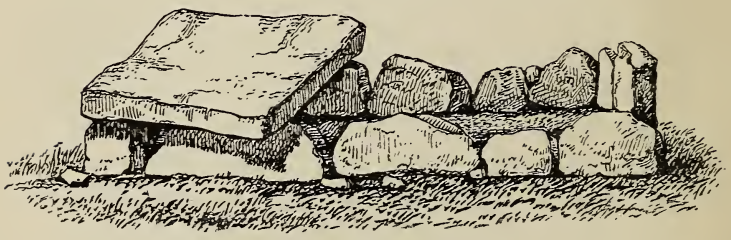


FIG. 73.—Dolmen of Tsîl.

the western end, would face the rising sun; while the extremities were merely fenced round by slabs, and not covered in at all.

The farthest off dolmens of this field are found near the Jisr el 'Allân; but also to the west of it, and north of the Roman road, single dolmen slabs can be traced as far as the neighbourhood of 'Ain Dakkar, and this leads me to believe that the whole northern part of the Zawîyeh esh Shurkîyeh, where it is covered by volcanic mounds, was once an immense necropolis of dolmens.

El Emshiyadât.—A marsh from which flows a good stream of water, a little south-west of Tel el Ash'ary. It turns the Tawâhîn (mills) el Biariât.

Khurbet el Emheiris.—The site of a modern, but now totally ruined, village; there are traces of ancient remains. It is situated in the muddy Wâdy el Emheiris, opposite Tell el Ash'ary, on the north.

El Emzeira'ah.—A ruined village with traces of ancient buildings.

Heit.—A village of moderate size, containing about thirty huts, built some of stone and some of mud. The best built and largest is the sheikh's house. The population does not exceed 150 Muhammedans. Some ruins lie near. Standing close on the steep borders of the Nahr el 'Allân, it commands a good view down into the gorge of this river. It possesses excellent arable land, and a water-supply from springs on the borders of the 'Allân. This village has been but recently built and settled by families coming from Sahem ej Jaulân, who have abandoned their property there to the usurers, and migrating, have built themselves houses among the scattered ruins of the ancient Heit.

Hummâm Siknâny.—See Ed Dera'ah.

Hummâm Ayyûb.—See Sheikh Sa'ad.

J'arah.—An extensive ruin showing great heaps of hewn and unhewn stones. It is situated on the Wâdy el Ehreir, near El 'Amurîyeh. The remains

of two ancient villages cover the low hills, but there are also other ruins scattered about the neighbourhood, over the ground lying between the two sites.

Jisr el Ehreir.—A ruined bridge crossing the Wâdy el Ehreir, where there is a gorge about 20 feet deep below the surrounding country. As far as can now be seen, the bridge originally consisted of fourteen arches; of these ten are still partially standing, but the rest have almost entirely disappeared. The bridge had a total length of 245 feet, and the roadway was 18 feet 9 inches wide. A large pointed arch is in the middle 16 feet 6 inches in span, and 18 feet from the crown of the arch to the stream below (September, 1884). The small arches to the south of the main one are completely ruined, while those on the north are still in such a condition as to allow of foot-passengers crossing with care. The bridge is, of course, impassable for animals, who take a more easterly road, where the sides of the wâdy are low, and the stream easy to cross even in the rainy season.

Jillîn.—A small, miserable-looking village, with no ancient remains, containing twenty huts, built some of mud and some of stone, with a population of about 100 *negroes*. I was informed that these negroes had been settled here by a certain Sheikh Sa'ad, the son of 'Abd el Kâder, who was himself a negro from the Soudân. He established negro

slaves in this place, and also in the village of Sheikh Sa'ad, where he built a monastery for them, and gave them their liberty. They have gradually spread over the country, and now occupy not only Jillîn, but also portions of Tell el Ash'ary, El 'Ajamy, Kefr es Sâmir, Yublah, and Zeizûn. The story was often repeated to me by negroes in other places, and it agrees with what former travellers, such as Consul Wetzstein, state concerning the immigration of negroes into this country.

The negroes settled at Jillîn and elsewhere are pleasant in their manners; they have vineyards and gardens, watered by the Wâdy el Emheiris, which produce beautiful grapes and vegetables. They are, however, lazy and devoid of enterprise; they live in miserable mud huts, much inferior to those of the rest of the Fellahîn of Haurân, and they allow the most fertile soil to lie waste around them.

The negro women are neither shy in manner nor hostile in disposition, as are often the Fellahîn women, who objected more to our surveying work than ever did their husbands. The negresses, on the contrary, when we allowed them to peep through the telescope of the theodolite, soon became our very good friends.

Khurbet Jebeleh.—A small ruin a mile west of Sahem ej Jaulân. It is close to the borders of the 'Allân, on a small mound, the summit of which

is covered with large stones of irregular shape. Scattered ruins extend for some distance down from this to the plain. The neighbourhood is rendered marshy by the spring and the stream of the Wâdy Jebeleh.

Khurbet ej Jebalîyeh.—A ruin consisting of deserted huts of stone, sometimes used during the autumn months by the Nu'êm Bedawin as storehouses. The huts are built very wide apart, and are spread over the plain. It is apparently an ancient site. A road from Nawâ to the Jisr el Allân runs through the place, and from its situation in the midst of so fine a country it ought to have attracted settlers before now; but the Nu'êm tribe having temporary occupation of it, villagers from other places do not dare to dispute possession with them.

Karak.—See Ed Dera'ah.

Kanât Fara'ûn.—See Ed Dera'ah.

Kûm el Mezeirîb.—See El Mezeirîb.

El Kulah el 'Atîkah.—See El Mezeirîb.

El Kul'ah ej Jedîdeh.—See El Mezeirîb.

Kûm el Kussub.—A hill covered with extensive ruins, among which grow two beautiful butm trees (terebinths). It is the point of the shoulder, on the north of which is the Wâdy el Ehreir, and on the south the Moyet Zeizûn. The spot commands a fine view over the charming valley at the junction of the two rivers, where they flow to the Wâdy

scattered ruins
Wâdy el Bajjeh
dam
village
Kom el Mezeirîb
Wâdy Khreiyân
Stone

BAJJEH.

esh Shelâleh and the head of the Sharî'at el Menâdireh.

El Mezeirîb.—The first station of the pilgrims on their way from Damascus to Mecca. Here they are wont to take several days' rest, and wait for the contingents which arrive from the Haurân and the west. On the east of the village (see plan, Fig. 74) stands the citadel, now rapidly going to ruin, called the *Kul'ah el 'Atîkah*, or the Old Castle. It is well built of hewn and unhewn stones, as is said, by Sultân Selîm, who in A.D. 1518 conquered Syria. The citadel is a great two-storied square building, of 279 feet 8 inches side, surmounted by square towers. At each of the four corners rises a tower, the plan of which is a square of 39 feet 7 inches side: and three smaller rectangular towers of 30 feet 4 inches side occupy the middle points in the southern, eastern, and western walls. The eastern and western walls have each twenty-two windows in the second storey, and the southern wall twenty-three; two or three windows also are pierced in each of the middle towers. To the north opens a gate, 12 feet 4 inches wide, surmounted by an arch with mouldings, supported on Corinthian columns, with acanthus-leaved capitals. Through this gateway, after passing a winding passage, formerly closed by an iron door, the courtyard is reached, which is overlooked by the square towers before described,


El Kulah
ej Jedideh
Ed Dukkakin
village
Vineyards
To Rás el Ain
boggy plants
Ruins
Government
Grinding Mill
El Kulah
el Aukab
Castle
Mosque
vaults
village
Bahret el Bajjeh
Kom el Jezeirib
Wady el Bajjeh
Electric Telegraph
Scale
0
100
200
300
400
500
1000 Ft.
PLAN OF
EL MEZEIRIB
AND THE BAHRET EL BAJJEH.

under which, on the ground-floor, are cross-arched vaultings, formerly set apart as grain magazines for the use of the pilgrims. The upper storey, where are the rooms for the pilgrims, is reached by two double stairs, in the east and west of the court. These lead in either case to a sort of divân, constructed in the middle towers. The upper storey is now totally ruined, and only portions of the surrounding walls as high as the windows yet stand. The magazines in the ground-floor are also for the most part in ruins, but one or two are still fit for use, and a large modern vault has been built in the north wall near the gate, which is now used as a Government storehouse, for receiving the tenths and the taxes, paid in, in kind, by the Fellahîn. The total height of the castle walls as they yet stand may be from 35 to 40 feet. The north-western tower, which, by travellers at the beginning of the century, is reported to have been armed with cannon, is now the best preserved, and commands a view over the neighbouring country. In the centre of the court there is a small rectangular mosque, the Jâm'aah, measuring 23 feet by 19 feet, with a round niche in the southern wall; but the whole building is now a complete ruin. To the south of it is a modern badly-built chamber, which, with several other rooms built of mud and stone in various parts of the courtyard, are used to shelter the caravan of

pilgrims. A large pillar stands at the northern end of the eastern wall of the court. The castle is still constantly occupied by Bedawin caravans carrying grain, who, on their journey down to the sea, make here their halt. The castle, which must be about 365 years old, has been built partly out of more

Inscription in the court of the Kulah el Atikah, Mezeirîb.

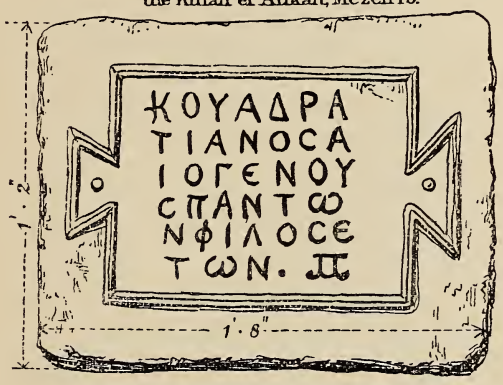


FIG. 75.

ancient remains, as is proved by the Roman mouldings set in the walls, and the great numbers of Greek inscriptions found lying about; but with one exception these last were too weather-worn to be deciphered. This inscription, built into the south-east corner of the modern vault above-mentioned, is given in Fig. 75.

On the north-western tower the ornaments shown in Fig. 76 were noticed, and the rosette, Fig. 77,

occurred in the wall of the Jâm'aah. The citadel crowns a low stony elevation; an immense dunghill

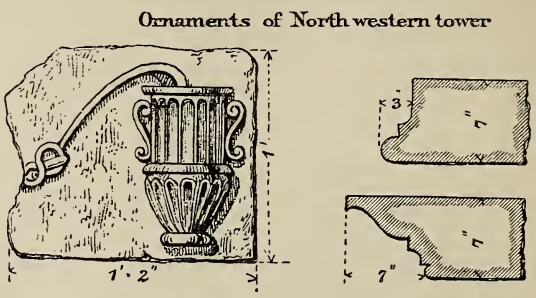


FIG. 76.

lies north of the gate, and beyond is the clear stream which comes down from Râs el 'Ain and

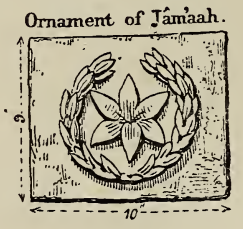


FIG. 77.

flows into the Bahret el Bajjeh. Beyond this we enter the so-called *Ed Dukkakîn*, or storehouses (see Fig. 78). Here are stored the crops, and before setting out the pilgrims provide themselves here with provisions for their long journey through the desert. Vegetables are procurable, and fine grapes in August

Kûm and Bahret el Bajjeh. Ed Dukkakîn.



FIG. 78.—View of El Mezeirîb and the Lake El Bajjeh from the Kul'ah el 'Atîkah.

and September, and many of the stores keep kitchen utensils. The Sûk, or bazaar, resembles that of Damascus in miniature, and is very superior to that of Ed Dera'ah. The Fellahîn and Bedawin of the neighbourhood frequent this place, and every other day they butcher sheep, goats, or a camel for meat. Some of the Dukkakîn are well built houses for this part of the country, with plastered walls, and gable roofs of timber, covered, not with tiles, but with mud, of which El Mezeirîb has an abundance. The Dukkakîn, through which passes a broad road, are surrounded by some fifty miserable mud huts. To the west of the Dukkakîn there is also a suburb of these. Along the northern bank of the stream, up to Râs el 'Ain, the merchants have planted vegetable gardens and vineyards, also willows, acacias, and a few fruit trees; but on the southern bank and in the neighbourhood of the spring there is nothing but a jungle of 'kusseib,' or cane. A little to the north of the Dukkakîn, on the way to Sheikh Sa'ad, are the ruins of a second fortress—the *Kul'ah ej Jedîdeh*, or the New Castle, which is said to have been built by a certain Dîa Pasha, or Yusuf Dîa, a former Mutasarrif of Haurân. It is of a later date, but is none the less now more of a ruin, than is the Kul'ah el 'Atîkah, and it is no longer used as a khân. The plan is rectangular, 190 feet long, and 115 feet wide; and, as far as can be seen from the walls yet stand-

ing, it contained many large and small chambers. Between the Dukkakîn and the Kul'ah el 'Atîkah, the stream of Râs el 'Ain broadens, and its banks have here been strengthened with modern masonry. Traces of an ancient building are found on the northern bank, called *El Hummâm*, the Bath. Below this the stream is dammed up, and below serves to turn a mill which is of a construction superior to what is generally found in this country. The mill has three stones and is solidly built of squared basalt blocks. It is the property of the Government, and is managed by from eight to twelve soldiers, under an officer, who is stationed at El Mezeirîb to receive the Government tenths and taxes, which are paid in cereals by the Fellahîn and Bedawin. The corn is ground night and day at the mill, and the flour is immediately taken to the '*Furrun*,' or oven, an isolated building next to the mill, where it is made up into dough and baked, and the loaves are sent off to Damascus for the consumption of the garrison. As the climate is very feverish and the place lonesome, soldiers consider being sent here in the light of a punishment, and they are always relieved at short intervals.

After working the mill, the stream runs into the *Bahret el Bajjeh*, sometimes also called Bahret el Mezeirîb (described above, p. 27), a small lake crowded with carp, occupying a depression of the

ground, and therefore invisible some distance off. In summer it covers an area of about 27 acres. This Bahret is the watering-place of the Mecca pilgrims, and looked upon as sacred. The water has rather a brackish taste, and its shores and bottom are muddy. Small islands, covered with reedy plants, rise up in the lake during the summer drought. In the centre is a large island, connected with the mainland by a paved and tolerably well-built causeway, about 130 yards long and 3 yards wide. Here is the old town called *Kûm el Mezeirîb*, the 'hillock of El Mezeirîb.' This was formerly the residence of the Governor of Haurân, but it is now nearly deserted, owing to the deadly air, produced by the miasmas rising from the surrounding water. It contains about sixty huts, built close together, of mud and stone, which crown the highest elevation of the islet at its northern end. A ditch containing water runs through an open place in the centre of the island. In the southern part the buildings are all in ruins. The island contains ten or twelve families, or about 50 souls, which added to the population of the Dukkakîn, who number about 200, would give a total population for El Mezeirîb of about 250 Muhammedans, with 8 to 12 soldiers additional. The town was formerly the seat of the Mutasarriflik, but this has since been transferred to Sheikh Sa'ad, on account of the unhealthiness of

the climate, which doubtless also accounts for the smallness of the population.

There are some ancient remains on the Kûm; and the foundations of a city-wall, 5 feet and more thick, built of rude slabs of basalt, without mortar, are seen near the surface of the water. There are also several large pillars rising up out in the lake. The plan of the village on the island is pear-shaped; and in its northern part it is about 100 yards broad, while on the south it tapers to a breadth of about 30 yards. Kûm el Mezeirîb must have been in ancient times a strongly fortified place; and the ruins and huge basaltic blocks, scattered about on the western and northern shores of the lake, would seem to be the remains of buildings of a date prior to the Moslem Conquest. The present name, of 'El Mezeirîb'—which means merely the 'Rendezvous of the Pilgrims' (also 'Park')—has doubtless taken the place of some more ancient appellation.

To the south of the Kul'ah el 'Atîkah, on the broad Haj road to Turrah, are to be seen two parallel rows of large stones. Here the market is held, and provisions are sold to the pilgrims during their sojourn at El Mezeirîb. The tents and storehouses of the dealers stand behind the stones, and a wide roadway is left between. The bustle of the season of the pilgrimage must form a strong contrast to the

silence and dulness which at other times envelop the place.

El Mezeirîb is no longer a telegraph station, although the line passes by the Kul'ah el 'Atîkah, on to Irbid.

El Mezeirîb stands 1,437 feet above the sea, and its temperature on the 8th of September, 1884, at half-past five in the morning, was 55° Fahr.; and at ten o'clock it was 86° Fahr. On the 9th, at a quarter to six in the morning, it was 53° Fahr.; and at ten o'clock, 84° Fahr. On neither of these mornings was there any appearance of dew, although during the night it had been very cold. The immediate neighbourhood of the town is stony, but beyond, the stones give place to a fine reddish soil, resembling that of the Nukrah of Haurân.

Moyet Zeizûn.—A fine stream of clear, cool water, which forms a high waterfall near Zeizûn. Described above (p. 30).

El M'asab.—A natural pool to the north of Tuffas, 50 by 25 yards across. It is perennial, but is filled with dirty rain-water, only, during the summer months.

El Mughârah, or *El Hummâm.*—The ruin of an ancient building. See under Tell el 'Ashary.

El Merkez.—The seat of government of Haurân; called also Sheikh Sa'ad.

Makâm Ayyûb, or Makâm en Neby Ayyûb.—See under Sheikh Sa'ad.

Makâm esh Sheikh el 'Ajamy.—See El 'Ajamy.

El Mudâfy.—A small ancient building. See below, under Nawâ.

Nawâ.—The largest village that I visited in Haurân with the exception of Ed Dera'ah. It is well situated, in a high valley, lying between the Tell ej Jâbiyeh, the Tell ej Jemû'ah, and the volcanic hills called Tellûl el Hesh; the valley slopes gently down towards Sheikh Sa'ad and Tsîl. The soil is excellent in the country to the south, but becomes rather stony in the land lying to the north and east. Nawâ may be taken as a specimen of a Haurân village of the best type.

According to my own estimate, which was compared with information obtained from the sheikhs, Nawâ contains about 300 houses and huts. These are generally built of stone without mortar, and many of them are now unoccupied. One villager holds two, three, or more of them, and will occupy one house till it gets ruined and becomes dangerous to live in, when he builds a new one at a suitable place alongside. Ancient building-stones, of which there is an abundance, are used for the side-walls, the roofs being formed of tree-trunks brought from the forests of Northern Jaulân. These are supplied by the Circassians, who are in the habit of driving

all over Haurân, in their heavy two-wheeled carts drawn by a team of oxen. They manage to make their way, across-country over the rubbish-heaps and the stones, with a heavy load of timber, which they bring from the forests of their adopted country in Jaulân, and sell in the villages. The approach of these vehicles may be heard half a mile off, for they use no grease on their wheels, and the noise they make is deafening.

The population of Nawâ, in spite of the extent of ground covered by the village and the numerous dwellings, does not exceed 750 to 800 souls. The streets are, as a rule, wide, and mostly straight. Large yards surround the houses, and are used as shelter for the flocks. In the centre of Nawâ is a large open space surrounding an ancient basin, the sides of which are well built, the basin itself being 40 feet square and 14 feet deep. It is called *'Ain er Rumashtah*, and is described above (p. 120). This pool is full all the year round, and supplies part of the town with very dirty drinking water. To the north of the village there is a second 'Ain or spring, which rises at the foot of Tell ej Jâbiyeh, and supplies a better quality of drinking water. Nawâ, both in ancient and in modern times, has ever been one of the most important and populous towns of North-Western Haurân. Ancient buildings have been used again and again, in part, for new structures, and many remains are thus

hidden from the eye of the explorer in the interior walls, where they are covered with a plastering of mud. Nawâ is thus a village which has been built of ruins, and is surrounded by a great field of them, but yet itself contains hardly anything except modern buildings. All about lie heaps of hewn and unhewn stones. Fragments of mouldings and ancient sculptures are common in the walls, but, curiously enough, no inscription was anywhere found.

The old buildings of any interest yet preserved are but two—the *Mudâfy* and the *Mêdany*. The first, the *Mudâfy*, lies at the extreme south end of the town, and would seem originally to have formed

El Mudâfy at Nawâ.

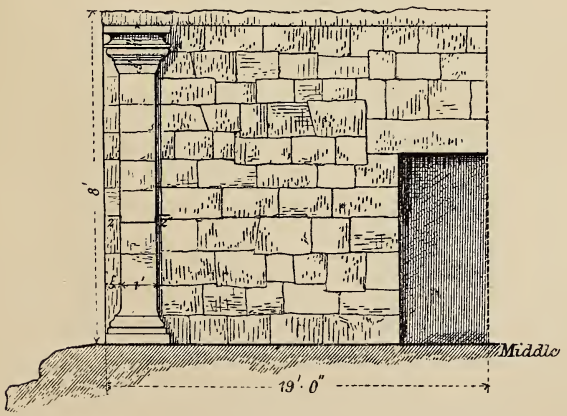


FIG. 79.

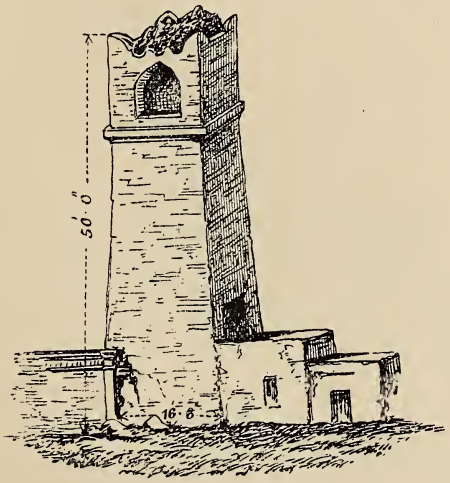
part of a neighbouring and larger construction. It is a small building, 19 feet square, and about 8 feet high,

with pilasters at each of the four corners, supporting a capital and standing on a base (see Fig. 79). One square opening, a door, is in the west wall. The building stones, of basalt, are well hewn, but the horizontal courses are often broken, and the stones are not all rectangular.

Along the southern side of the village, and adjacent to the little building just described, there are some remains of ancient walls. The ground here, however, is now so entirely built over by the modern huts, that no idea could be gained of the original plan of the building to which these belonged. The *Mudâfy*, as shown by its name, is the 'Menzûl,' or guest-chamber: it has been lately restored, and the roofing is modern and of wood. The absence of all windows makes it probable that this Mudâfy was originally a mausoleum. A large yard, used for stabling the horses of the guests, surrounds it, and the whole building is the property of the Sheikh Ahsein, one of the chief men of Nawâ.

The second ancient building is the *Mêdany* (Fig. 80), and is one of the peculiar towers already described in the article on Ed Dera'ah (see above, p. 133). Although now a ruin, it still stands about 50 feet high, and the plan of the base is a square of 16 feet 6 inches. In the construction, no mortar was used at the joints. Its lower part, unlike the tower at Ed Dera'ah, has the form of a truncated pyramid, crowned by

a simple moulding. Above this the tower rises perpendicularly, and has a wide-pointed arched window on either side. The corners are raised and form a sort of battlement. The slabs of the roof have now in many cases fallen in, but seem originally to have



Mêdany at Nawâ

FIG. 80.

been dovetailed together. On the south of the Mêdany stands a Corinthian column of basalt, unfluted, 13 feet high, and 1 foot 5 inches in diameter. It supports the fragment of a Corinthian entablature, surmounting a wall which is connected with the masonry of the tower. Several stones bearing egg-mouldings, and vitruvian scrolls, of Roman origin, are built into the walls of the Mêdany. A church or

mosque originally stood on the south side of the Mêdany, and this last must be of a later date than are the Roman mouldings built into it, which were evidently taken from some more ancient building. The Mêdany is now surrounded with dwelling-houses, and as the women screamed at our approach, we were obliged to retire without pursuing our investigations further. The inhabitants of Nawâ are not very polite, and are, in fact, apt to be hostile

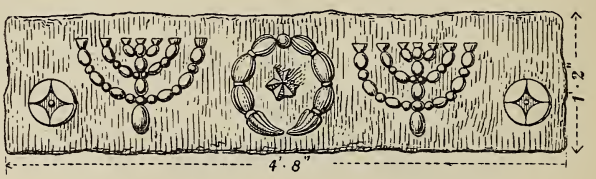


FIG. 81.

to foreigners. They had no ancient coins, they said; they knew of no antiquities, and they would give no information unless we forced it out of them by cross-examination, and then their remarks were perfunctory and not to be relied upon.

On the lintel over the door of a modern building, close to the 'Ain er Rumashtah, is the ornamentation shown in Fig. 81, representing apparently the Jewish seven-branched candlestick.

Not far from the above is a doorway, shown in Fig. 82, where three curiously shaped stones (*a*, *b*, *c*)

are placed over the plain lintel-stone *d*. Over the gateway of the yard of Sheikh Ibrahîm el Midyab's dwelling, who is the head-sheikh of Nawâ, is a lintel-stone 6 feet 6 inches long, and 1 foot 2 inches high, which is likewise ornamented with the seven-

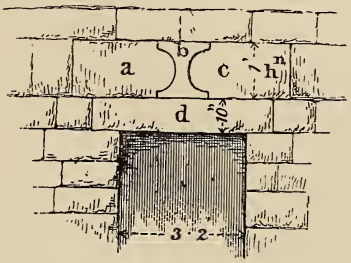


FIG. 82.

branched candlestick and a sort of vitruvian scroll, as shown in Fig. 83.

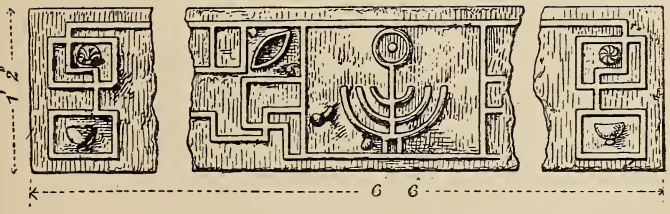


FIG. 83.

In the sheikh's house, or 'Menzûl,' is a block which evidently formed the key-stone of an arch, on which is represented not only the seven-branched

candlestick, but also the Jewish jubilee trumpet and olive-leaf (Fig. 84). This Sheikh Ibrahîm el Midyab, besides being head-man of Nawâ, holds an influential position among the sheikhs of Haurân, and

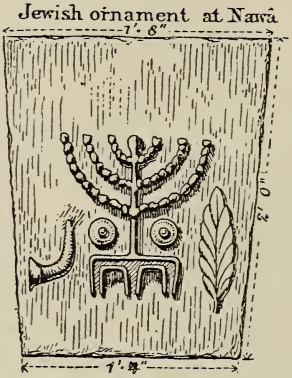


FIG. 84.



FIG. 84 *a*.

is regarded by them as the protector of their property. While walking through the streets of Nawâ, and also in the yards of the houses, we noticed on the wall-stones many rude representations of the Jewish candlestick (Fig. 84 *a*): and in fact we found hardly any other form of ornamentation. Nawâ must presumably have had a preponderating Jewish population in ancient times. It is mentioned (according to Ritter, Erdkunde, xv. *a*, ii. *a*, p. 356) in the Antonine Intinerary as 'Neve,' and also by Abulfeda; and it was a Jewish city in the ecclesiastical province of Arabia. St. Jerome identifies

it (erroneously) with Nineveh, and the late writers of the Talmud place it near a city named Chalamis. As already noted, we had not the good fortune to discover any inscriptions and could obtain no coins, which might throw light on the past history of this important place. Illegible Arabic characters were noticed on some hewn stones, but so carelessly engraved and worn that it was doubtful whether they were modern or ancient. After passing through the western quarter of Nawâ, and traversing some fields covered with scattered ruins, at a distance of 80 yards from the last dwelling-houses, we came to the Wely of the *Sheikh Muhiy ed Dîn en Nawâwy*. He is the patron-saint of the town, and is said to have been a man of great knowledge and influence. The tomb bears traces of having been enclosed by a square building, but is now in complete ruin; but there are still the remains of an arch and also of a small niche with Roman mouldings, very much defaced. The sarcophagus of the sheikh occupied a place in the wall near to the entrance from the north. The ruined heap of stones and slabs is now shaded by a beautiful butm tree. Originally there must have been a small mosque built over the tomb, with a niche to the south, the whole being surrounded by a courtyard. Lying some 400 yards to the north-west of this again is the *Wely en Neby Sâm* (Fig. 85). All round the ground is covered with

stones. The grave itself is marked by a slight elevation barely 2 feet high, but some 19 feet long; and no signs of masonry or slabs are to be seen. The mound occupies a position near the southern wall

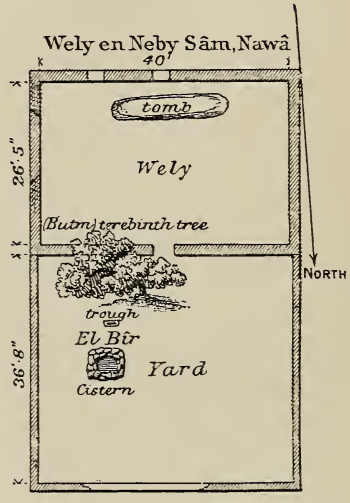


FIG. 85.

of a rectangular building, measuring 40 feet long from east to west, and 26 feet 5 inches broad from north to south. The roof has fallen in, and the remains of the walls, 5 to 6 feet high, show that it was originally built of hewn and unhewn stones, carefully joined, without mortar. In the southern wall are two round-arched windows. In the northern wall there is the lower part of a gateway, which was

formerly shut by a stone door, as seen from the broken portions lying near. This leads out to a courtyard, measuring 36 feet 8 inches by 40 feet, lying to the north of the mausoleum. It is surrounded by a wall of unhewn stones, now many of them thrown down. Near the gateway stands a huge and very ancient butm or terebinth. A *Bîr*, or cistern, with a small modern trough, is found near the eastern wall, the Bîr being now entirely filled up with rubbish. The sarcophagus seen in the wall of the yard of the Wely Muhiy ed Dîn, now used as a trough, would presuppose the presence of a well or cistern there also; and in fact a mosque cannot exist without a water-supply, as ablution before prayer is obligatory.

This ancient building has served apparently as the place of worship, successively, of Christians and Moslems, for below the butm tree in the yard is a

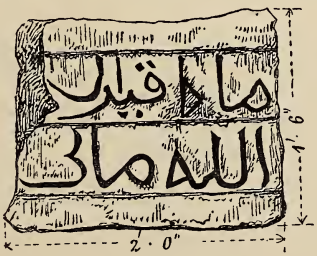


FIG. 86.

basalt slab engraved with Arabic characters, now much defaced and broken (Fig. 86), but which, from

the name of Allah conspicuous thereon, must have had a religious import; and close to it among the rubbish is another basalt block, broken into two, bearing a Greek inscription (Fig. 87). A little to



Fig. 87.

the west of the door is a second Greek inscription, on a stone built upside down into one of the lower courses of the wall (Fig. 88).

The spot was evidently held sacred among the

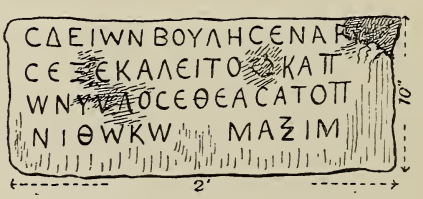


Fig. 88.

early Christians, and the name 'Sâm' is the Arab form of Shem, the son of Noah, who, according to

the local tradition of Nawâ, was burned in this tomb. This tradition led me to collect the names which might warrant the identification of this country with that spoken of in the Bible as the *Land of Uz.* Now we find in the first place that Sheikh Sa'ad, three miles south of Nawâ, is a spot which, from the most ancient times, has been held sacred to the memory of Job (Neby Ayyûb), 'who was a man of the land of Uz' (Job i. 1). Then, *Tell el Khammân,* ten miles south-east of Sheikh Sa'ad, is a name which might recall that of the country of Job's friend, Eliphas the Temanite; while *En Na'eimeh,* a little east of Ed Dera'ah, may be the home of his other friend, Zophar the Naamathite; and the district of *Ez Zuweit,* east of Jebel 'Ajlûn, I take to be the place from which came his third friend, Bildad the Shuhite. Also *Beidar Ûz,* a ruin I discovered in the north-western part of Jaulân, may be translated the 'barn-floor of Uz.' These names and traditions, to my mind, furnish strong presumptive evidence that the country of Western Haurân—that shown in the present map, and which must be held to include a portion of the centre of the present Jaulân—represents the Biblical land of Uz. A further point of coincidence is afforded by the name 'Nawâ' which is nearly identical with 'Newah' or 'Nûh,' the Arabic name for Noah, who is given as the great grandfather of Uz. Further

evidence, which would lead to our identifying this part of the Haurân with the land of Uz, and make Nawâ the residence of Job, may be found in Mr. Lawrence Oliphant's 'Land of Gilead' (pages 72, 77, 79); and should this theory prove to have some foundation in fact, the present Wely en Neby Sâm might mark the site of some more ancient monument and be a place of no inconsiderable interest.

The *Neby Abu el Hajjeh*, situated a little west of the Neby Sâm, is another tomb of a Muhammedan saint. It is shaded by an old butm tree.

Khurbet en Nîleh.—A ruin presenting scattered stones. A good spring, the 'Ain en Nîleh, is found here near the Tell 'Ashtarah. If I am not mistaken, a place called 'Nilacome' is mentioned in Hierocles, which might be identified with the present En Nîleh.

Râs el 'Ain.—1. The spring of the Bahret el Bajjeh, which rises a little to the east of the Dukkakîn of El Mezeirîb, now concealed by masonry, and covered by a thick jungle of cane. There is a fine stream flowing from it to the Bahret el Bajjeh. 2. The spring watering the small perennial Wâdy Bâbîs, which bubbles out of the earth a little to the south of El Mezeirîb. 3. A natural pool formed by springs, situated about three-quarters of a mile to the south-east of Zeizûn. From it runs the clear and plentiful stream of the Moyet Zeizûn.

Rujm el Kheleif.—A small hill or mound near the Jisr el 'Allân, the summit of which is covered with large, rude stones, set up artificially; it is surrounded by dolmens. See above, p. 151.

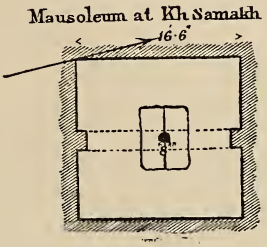


FIG. 89.

Khurbet Samakh.—A large ruin, some of it covering a slight elevation, and the rest scattered over the plain. It lies half-way between El Mezeirîb and Tuffas. To the west of the Khurbet, on the plain, is a ruin, the plan of which is a square of 16 feet 6 inches side. The piers of an arch still remain, but the walls are now reduced to the level of the ground. The arch divided the room into two equal halves, and the floor must have been below the surface. (Fig. 89.)

In the centre of the room is a rectangular stone slab, 1½ yards long and about 1 yard broad, with a circular hole, of 8 inches diameter, in the middle. This lies among other hewn and unhewn stones in the interior of the building, and near it, also on the

ground, is the capital of a pillar (Fig. 90), most probably that which supported one side of the arch already mentioned. On other stones were seen

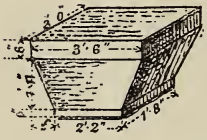


FIG. 90.

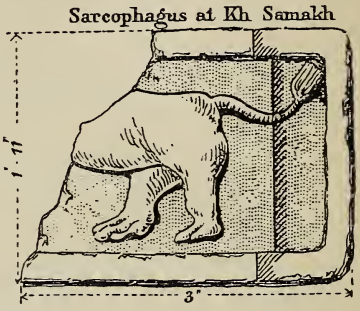


FIG. 91.

Roman mouldings of the egg and pearl pattern, also a vitruvian scroll ornament, not completely finished. Partly covered with earth, but not far from these, was a broken slab of stone, evidently a fragment of the longer side of a sarcophagus, which had been ornamented with a bas-relief representing a lion (Fig. 91). The guide whom I had brought with me from El Mezeirîb, told me he was present when the sarcophagus was first dug out of the mausoleum; it was then, he said, intact and covered by the stone with the circular hole in the centre. The sarcophagus was broken into by the Government officials, who found inside a jar of gold coins; these were sold, and the proceeds applied to the building of the

Government flour-mill at El Mezeirîb. He also stated that many stones had been taken from this place and used for building the walls of the mill. If all this be true, and I see no reason to doubt the main part of my guide's account, the chamber here described must have originally been a mausoleum

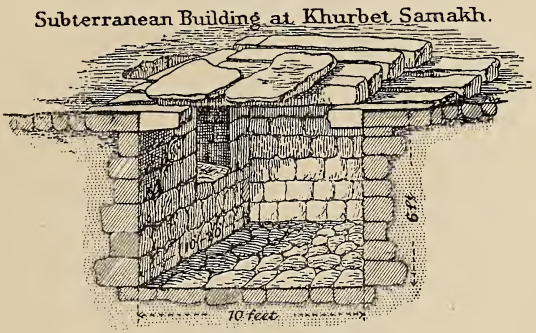


FIG. 92.

resembling that of Sahem ej Jaulân. (See above, p. 98.) On the hill of Khurbet Samakh, which is covered with a quantity of stone slabs, there are also some traces of subterranean buildings. We noticed especially many small chambers, measuring about 10 feet square and of hardly a man's height, dug out in the earth. According to the usual method found in the Haurân buildings, these are roofed over with rude slabs of basalt, 4 and 5 feet long, 7 to 9 inches wide, and about 5 inches thick (see Fig. 92), laid one close to the other, without mortar. An opening is

left at the side, and here there were sometimes steps; the walls being built of unhewn stones and without mortar. When the covering-slabs were not long enough to stretch across the space, the ends were supported by rude corbels. The roof thus formed was further covered with other slabs of basalt, laid cross-wise, and over all was put earth, thus bringing it up to the level of the surrounding country. These dwellings most probably date back to the very earliest times, when the Haurân was first settled.

Among the rest, one very large underground chamber was found which had a length of 33 feet and a width of 13 feet, roofed over with a cylindrical

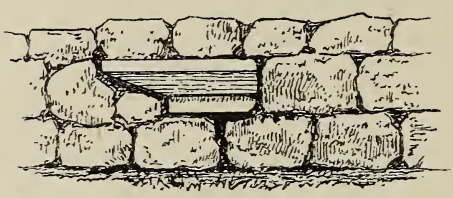


FIG. 93.

vault measuring about 12 feet from crown to base. At present the whole of the interior is filled with mud and rubbish. The crown of the vaulting came up to the level of the upper earth. A square door was found in the western side of the vault, but no other. The stones used were unhewn, small, and set together without mortar, leaving spaces of from

half an inch to an inch in between. The walls of the abutment were somewhat carelessly built; now and again they had used stones with mouldings (Fig. 93). The building is probably of a later date than that of the other subterranean chambers found at Kh. Samakh.

Sîret ej Jisr, or *Es Sîreh*.—A small hill covered with ruins, among which are seen hewn stones, Roman mouldings, and many shafts of basalt columns, 1 foot 6 inches in diameter. The place is not far from the Jisr el Ehreir. There stood here, perhaps, a temple devoted to the worship of Ashtaroth (the deity honoured at the neighbouring Tell el Ash'ary), or else, as the Arabic name, Síret, would indicate, there was here a causeway to the bridge, and possibly a Roman toll-house.

Kefr es Sâmir.—A miserable village, now only partly occupied, but surrounded by great heaps of basalt blocks, and traces of modern buildings. On the east are the remains of an ancient building, which was probably a convent, similar to the one found at Sahem ej Jaulân. Unfortunately, while I was surveying here, one of my Zaptiehs got into a quarrel with the villagers about barley, and hence they were to me more reserved and hostile than even were their neighbours at Sahem ej Jaulân. The village is built for the most part of stone, and must in old days have been a place of some importance. The

population, however, is rapidly decreasing, and only about 40 huts, with barely 150 Muhammedans, are now found here. The greater number of houses are in ruin. There is abundance of water all round the village, but this renders the climate unhealthy, for the ground is marshy. The soil, however, is excellent. The villagers are very hostile to every 'Beij' (Bey) or foreigner who comes there, believing

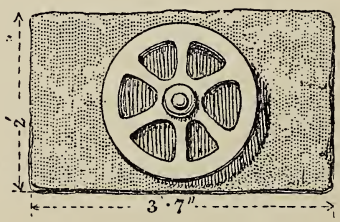


FIG. 94.

that the result of his visit can only be to deprive them of the little yet left to them by the usurers. The only sketch I was able to make was of a slab on which in bas-relief is the figure of a wheel, with an ornamented nave (Fig. 94).

Es Sufukîyeh.—A hill covered with scattered ruins, opposite Khurbet Jebeleh, and close to the 'Allân. The large unhewn stones have been used by the shepherds to make sheepfolds. There is an abundance of water round the place. To the north is the marshy Wâdy Jebeleh, and close on the south is

the plentiful spring *'Ain Sufukîyeh*, which turns several small mills on the slopes of the 'Allân.

*Sheikh Sa'ad.**—The seat of the Mutasarrif of Haurân. The place consists of two parts, the old village of Sheikh Sa'ad to the north, and ¾ of a mile south of this *El Merkez*, 'the centre,' or seat of government.



FIG. 95.—Village of Sheikh Sa'ad. From a photograph.

The old village of Sheikh Sa'ad is a miserable-looking place, containing about 60 huts built of stone and mud, many of them now fallen to ruin. It has a population of about 220 souls, all without exception negroes. As already mentioned in the account of Jillîn (see p. 155), these negroes were brought by Sheikh Sa'ad, himself a native of the Soudân, to this part of the country, and settled in

* Also called *Sa'adîyeh.*

a monastery which he built here. He gave those who were slaves their liberty, and left an endowment for the monastery, which still affords revenues on which the negroes subsist, and furnishes a sufficient surplus to pay the servants who attend the makâm or tomb of the founder. Long before the time of the Muhammedan saint, however, the neighbourhood was celebrated for the Monastery of Job, the 'Deir Ayyûb.' The ruins of this edifice are found at the present Merkez; and its walls have lately been rebuilt, and the place turned into a barrack. The Monastery of Job (according to Professor Socin in Baedecker's 'Palestine and Syria,' also Wetzstein in his 'Reisebericht') was a spot much venerated by the ancient people of the Haurân, who held this to be the country of Job, and the first monastery was built by the Jefnide king, Ama I., as early as the middle of the third century of our era.

At the present day, at Sheikh Sa'ad, there are rival saints, for while the sheikh is adored by the negroes, Job is the patron of the greater mass of the Fellahîn. The stream flowing from the Hummâm Ayyûb, and passing the Makâm esh Sheikh Sa'ad, is therefore known by a double name, being called Moyet Ayyûb or Moyet Sheikh Sa'ad, according as it is a negro or a Fellâh who is speaking.

In the village are the remains of many square

subterranean chambers, very like those found at Khurbet Samakh (p. 183), but the slabs forming the ceiling have generally fallen in. They are at present used for storing straw, but they show how long ago the place was settled. The streets are narrow and dusty, and contain a few shops for the sale of provisions. Round the western part of the village, and irrigated by the 'Moyet' of the two saints, the negroes have planted fruit trees and cultivate vegetables and vines. The grapes are of excellent flavour, and of large size. An attempt recently made (as shown by the two water-towers here) to supply the Merkez with drinking-water from this source has apparently failed.

At the south-eastern extremity of the long, low hill upon which the village is built, and elevated about 40 feet above the surrounding plain (see Fig. 95), is the Wely Sakhret Ayyûb, or 'Rock of Job.' It stands in a rectangular Jâm'aah or mosque, which measures 43 feet from north to south, and 33 feet from east to west, the roof being supported by six columns and ten pilasters, the latter built into the wall, connected above by pointed arches, each with a keystone in the crown (see Figs. 96, 97). The span of the centre arche is 11 feet 6 inches, while the side ones measure 8 feet 3 inches. The pillars are rectangular, and surmounted by simple cube-shaped capitals, like the generality found in

Haurân, and they are without bases. The height of the Jâm'aah, from the ceiling down to the rubbish on the floor, is 26 feet. The roof was covered in with large basalt slabs, laid from arch to arch and supported by corbels like those found in the chambers

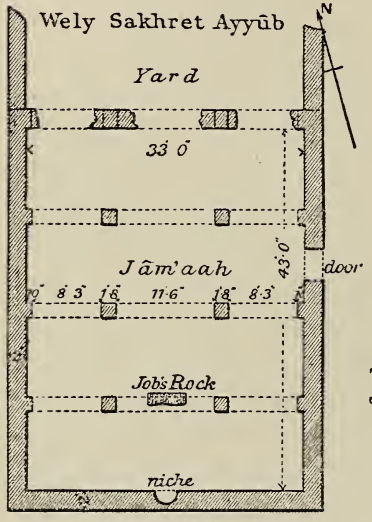


FIG. 96.

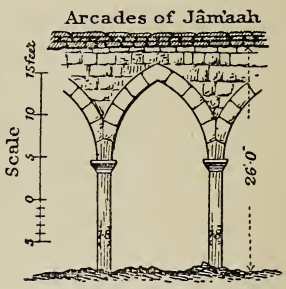


FIG. 97.

at Khurbet Samakh (see p. 184). In the east wall is a door, but the main entrance was from the north, where there is a courtyard. A small niche in the southern wall, 6 feet 6 inches high, 2 feet 7 inches wide (Fig. 98), has over it a cylindrical vaulting, and is flanked by two beautiful pillars of white marble. In front of this niche, and under the first centre

arch, is the sacred stone, the 'Sakhret Ayyûb,' or the Rock of Job. Here, so says the legend, Job sat, when he was leprous, and received his friends. The Rock is a monolith (Fig. 99) of basalt, 7 feet high, and about 4 feet broad, but was originally, in all probability, larger than it now is, and the floor is covered with rubbish and pieces of stone fallen down from the walls of the building.

Niche of the Jam'aah.

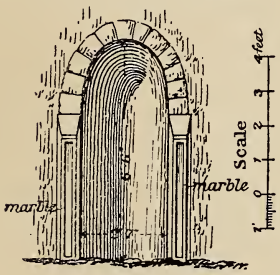


FIG. 98.

Rock of Job, facing the niche.

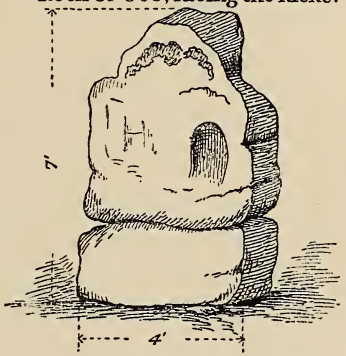


FIG. 99.

The rock is split into two portions by a horizontal crack, and on its surface are marks somewhat resembling modern letters, but they were perfectly illegible. Whether the small circular depression in the upper part near the right-hand corner be natural or artificial I was unable to decide. I agree, however, with Mr. Lawrence Oliphant ('Land of Gilead,' p. 83), who finds good reason for connect-

ing this stone with the ancient worship of the Phœnicians; and it is, therefore, a most interesting relic, and, I imagine, one of great antiquity. When in camp near the Wely of the Sakhret Ayyûb, a Fellâh came to my tent, and requesting me to follow him, led the way to a rock which he called 'Khanzîr,' or 'the Pig,' and near which (as usual in such cases) a great treasure is said to be buried. The story runs that some negroes who had excavated here found many gold coins, but while dividing the booty they quarrelled, and the remainder of the treasure was, by agreement, left buried, and to be dug up at some future time. Since, however, the Government has been transferred to this place, they have not dared to make any further excavations. The monolith or 'Khanzîr' is of pyramidal form, 6 feet high, and of rude workmanship, situated about 200 yards from the Wely to the east. At a distance of 40 yards farther north of this, there is a depression in the ground, with many large stones piled round it; but it is impossible now to say whether these originally formed a sacred circle or square. Here the treasure was said to lie buried. This isolated monolith thus rising up in the midst of a flat country must originally, I take it, have been an object of religious worship. The negroes, it is said, were told to dig here by an old Muhammedan sheikh who

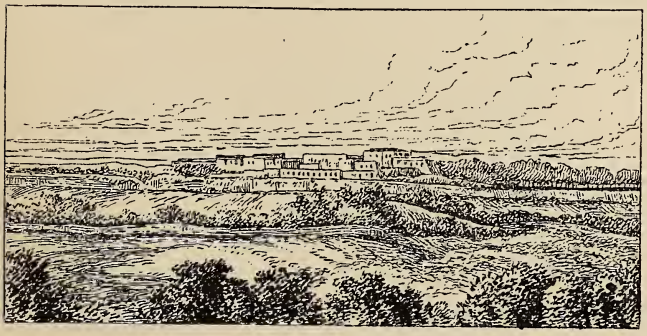
was occasionally seen passing through Sheikh Sa'ad. Over the roof at the south end of the Jâm'aah, and just above the little niche, rises a whitewashed cupola, surmounting a tower, 12 feet high, and 10 feet square, which has round-arched windows in each of its four sides. The building is constructed of squared stones. The surface of the ground on the western side of the Jâm'aah, or Wely Sakhret Ayyûb, is nearly on a level with the roof of the building, but on the eastern side the wall stands up to a height of about 30 feet; and the dwelling-houses crowd it in on the north and west. Standing on the top of the square tower, which rises about 80 feet above the surrounding country, an admirable view is obtained. The sanctuary is now falling into ruin, and the interior becoming dangerous from the blocks that are loose in the roof.

The negroes of Sheikh Sa'ad are good-natured people, and friendly in their manners to foreigners. They are much lazier than the Fellahîn. They live almost entirely on the vegetables and fruits from the gardens, but in the way of agriculture they do as little as they can. The *Hummâm Ayyûb*, or 'Bath of Job,' lies to the east of the *Wely*, or *Makâm*, which is the tomb of *Sheikh Sa'ad*, and just at the foot of the hill. The Hummâm is an ancient square building, with the upper part modern and covered over by a large cupola. From a spring which rises at

the foot of the hill, an open channel conducts water through the yard to the bath, where it gushes out into a tank in the floor. The bath is evidently modern. It is reputed to have healing virtues, being from the identical source in which Job washed himself when suffering from leprosy. The square building is ancient, and built in the old Haurân style of architecture, very simple, with large hewn and unhewn stones, and has very thick walls. The place is greatly venerated by the Fellahîn and Bedawin, who were present in such numbers during my visit, as effectually to prevent any sketches being made. The Hummâm is surrounded by a courtyard known as the Jâm'aah. On the west of it is the *Makâm*, or *Wely esh Sheikh Sa'ad*, a building which is considerably larger than the Hummâm Ayyûb. Entering a large paved court, called the Jâm'aah, we found that the centre was occupied by a basin of clear, cool water, shaded by a magnificent walnut-tree, while willows are planted all round the yard. On the south is the Wely, or tomb, a large square building with a cupola. A hall for prayer has been added, running out at right angles from its western end. The spot is surrounded by gardens, one of which, lying between the Hummâm Ayyûb and the Wely of the Sheikh, is kept in excellent order by the negroes. They manifested some suspicion and jealousy when their sanctuary was thus visited by

an unbeliever; and apparently, at the present day, the tomb of the Soudânese Saint is held in higher esteem than is the shrine of the Patriarch.

Leaving the shrines and following the broad road, we went on to the *Merkez*, which lies three-quarters of a mile to the south of the village. Along this road the Government has planted rows of trees, which are watered by the Moyet Ayyûb.



El Merkez from the North.
FIG. 100.

The *Merkez* (the Centre) is the residence of the Governor of the Haurân. It is a group of Government buildings, consisting of the Serâyah on the south; the Telegraph Office (international service) on the east; a barrack on the north; and the Mutasarrif's private residence on the west (Fig. 100). These stand round a great Square, about 330 feet across, and near the Serâyah is a water-tank. The buildings are all new, and well-built of squared stones

set in mortar. In the north-western corner may still be seen the remains of a one-storied building, constructed of hewn stones, not unlike the sheikhs' houses at Sahem ej Jaulân and Kefr es Sâmir. This is all that is now left of the Deir Ayyûb, or Convent of Job, described as standing here by Wetzstein, and at the time of his visit still untouched. It now forms part of the barrack, and is plastered and whitewashed over the whole of the interior. On the lintel of the rectangular southern door on the



FIG. 101.

side looking into the yard is a cross in relief with the *A* and *Ω* cut below (Fig. 101), showing that the original building must have been Christian. The dwellings of Government officials and a small Sûk, or bazaar, for vegetables and other provisions, lie to the east of the Government Square, and the town is now increasing rapidly in size. The entire population of Sheikh Sa'ad and the Merkez does not as yet exceed 260 souls: this number, however, does not include the soldiers and Zaptîehs of the Mutasarrifiyeh. There is abundance of water in the neighbourhood, and this renders the climate rather

feverish; but the Governor has begun of late to plant the neighbourhood with eucalypti, willows, and other trees, which without doubt will make the place more healthy.

In the western wall of the Square is the gate leading to the Makâm Ayyûb, or grave of Job. Here is a rectangular building (see Fig. 102) of much the same character as the Hummâm Ayyûb, 45 feet long and

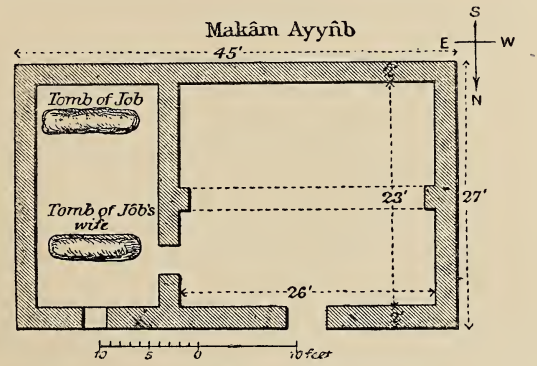


FIG. 102.

27 feet across. It stands close outside the western wall of the Government Square, and contains two chambers. The larger of these, to the west, measures 23 by 26 feet, and is divided into two sections by a round arch, the piers of which have neither capitals nor bases, and which, from the crown to the paved floor, measures 13 feet. The square doorway in the north wall has the Greek inscription illustrated in Fig. 103 carved on the lintel. In the eastern wall

of the chamber an opening leads into the inner sanctuary. This contains two graves, that of Job lying to the south, and on the north that of his wife; these are long and narrow, built up with stones to a height of a couple of feet, and plastered over. Rags of different colours, fastened on sticks which are left here by visitors, almost cover the graves. In the northern wall there is a small square window. The building is one storey high, and is faced with slabs of basalt.

At Sheikh Sa'ad there is a Telegraphic Office, and

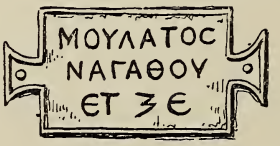


FIG. 103.

telegrams can be sent from here by way of Damascus to any part of the world, in Arabic or any European language. Sheikh Sa'ad stands at an elevation of 1,624 feet above the sea-level. The thermometer during my stay there registered on September 10th, at 5.30 in the morning, 54·5° Fahr.; at 10 o'clock, 86° Fahr. September 11th, at 5.30 in the morning, it was 54° Fahr.; and at 10 o'clock, 82° Fahr.

Khurbet es Sannîn.—A ruin of small size, consisting of a few stone huts, occupied during part of the year by some 10 or 12 men. It is 1½ miles due east of the village of Sheikh Sa'ad.

Sinn Nawâ.—A range of rocky, volcanic hills lying to the east of Nawâ. Their summits were split during some epoch of volcanic activity, and they appear from a distance like teeth, which has led to the name 'Sinn,' or 'Teeth' of Nawâ, being applied to them.

Tell el Mukârim.—A small hill at the junction of the valleys of the Ehreir, of the Moyet Zeizûn, and the Wâdy esh Shelâleh. It forms the western extremity of the ridge running between the Ehreir and the Moyet Zeizûn.

Tâhûnet ez Z'abeh.—A corn-mill at the junction of the above-mentioned valleys.

Turrah.—A good-sized village on the Haj road, 5 miles south of El Mezeirîb. Unexplored.

Tellûl Kana'ân.—Two small hills a mile north of Tell esh Shehâb, near the Wâdy el Bajjeh. Their Arabic name, which may be rendered 'the hills of Canaan,' is worthy of note, and, I imagine, must be old. There are ruins found on both the hills, but they are not sufficiently well-preserved to enable a judgment to be formed as to their date.

Tawâhîn et Tell.—The name of a group of thirty-five corn-mills, which, with the ruins of many others, belong to the large town of Tell esh Shehâb. They are situated above and below the waterfall of the Wâdy el Bajjeh in the Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb.

Tell esh Shehâb.—A large and populous village

situated at the head of the Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb, and shut in on the north, south, and west by the gorge. On the east it is approached by a narrow neck. The village itself is built on the hill, and to the east has the remains of fortifications, built with large unhewn stones. A line of outworks, formed by a sloping wall 20 feet and more high (Fig. 104), built with small unhewn stones, and still in a good state of preservation, serves to protect the village;

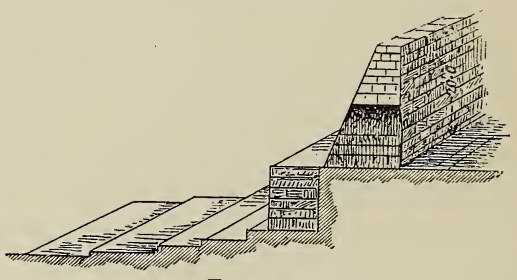


FIG. 104.

and outside this there are no buildings. The only entrance is from the east, through what must have been an ancient gateway. Here two solid stairways in opposite flights lead up to a sort of landing in front of the gateway; but the structure is much fallen to ruin, and many of the stones have been taken away, and are built into the neighbouring houses. On the three other sides the village is defended by steep cliffs of basaltic rocks, 60 to 80 feet high, which fall abruptly down into the wâdy. The

remains of a second and inner wall still exist, standing close to the modern houses; its masonry being of the old Roman-Haurân character, while the exterior wall, with the steps and the pavement which are before the city gate, would appear to be of a later date, and were probably built during the earlier years of the Muhammedan occupation. The village is one of the finest now found in Haurân; it has wide streets, and possesses some very well built houses. Those belonging to the sheikh are in the centre of the town, and round about are many excellent stone houses. A little Sûk, or bazaar, with provision-stores, marks the place as one of importance.

By my own estimate, checked also by the statements of the villagers, Tell esh Shehâb contains 135 houses, and a population that must number about 600 souls. Owing, however, to the peculiar position of the village, the population is more crowded together than is generally the case in the Haurân towns. The people are, as a rule, very well off. They possess fertile fields of corn, and have planted many orchards and vegetable gardens to the north, along the Wâdy el Bajjeh, where, owing to the abundance of water, the fruit trees flourish, supplying them with quantities of pears and apples, besides apricots, plums, etc., of most excellent flavour.

The position of the village renders it a natural

fortress, and as it is further protected by being the residence of the two rich and influential sheikhs, Muhammed and Ahmed, Aulâd Hashîsh el 'Abbâs, the place is considered as a city of refuge for those who, on account of blood-feuds, have been obliged to leave their homes. An actual case of this came under my notice here. The Sheikh of *Z*eizûn, who some time before had become mixed up in a blood-feud that had broken out with the Bedawin, was obliged, he and his family and all his relations, to abandon their property at *Z*eizûn, and had come to live under the protection of the Aulâd Hashîsh el 'Abbâs of Tell esh Shehâb. Protection having been granted to them, some of the villagers of *Z*eizûn in company with the Bedawin (one of whose relations had been the victim, and his death the cause of the feud), had declared war against the inhabitants of Tell esh Shehâb, and several skirmishes were the consequence. The inhabitants of Tell esh Shehâb had hitherto been victorious, and only a few months before my visit they had succeeded in driving back their enemies. But they have only retired until they can recruit their numbers, and will attack again when there is a better prospect of success. Being so strong, the villagers are very independent in their ways, and the two sheikhs above-mentioned are treated by everyone with great respect. Although one would think there ought to

be ancient remains at Tell esh Shehâb, I could discover neither inscriptions nor carved stones, and the ancient materials must all have been built into the modern houses. The Arabic name Tell esh Shehâb means merely 'the Hill of the Hero' or 'the Warrior,' but from its commanding position it must have been a place of importance in ancient times, and had probably some other name.

Tell el 'Arâr.—A village of moderate size, 7 miles east of El Mezeirîb. Unexplored. The *Tell el Khammân*, which lies 2 miles north of it, is a small village, and contains a Khudr, or Tomb of a Muhammedan saint; it is also unexplored. According to my theory we have here the home of Eliphaz the Temanite (see above, p. 179).

Tell el Ash'ary.—An artificial hill, which rises above the plain to the height of about 80 or 100 feet. The village is built on the northern portion of the hill-summit; on the south the ground is unoccupied except by a threshing-floor and some scattered ruins. The hill in its length lies from north to south; and from the centre running south is a depression which divides the southern hill plateau into two shoulders. The village contains about fifty squalid huts, built partly of stone, partly of mud and straw. Many of these have already fallen in, and the place is evidently going to ruin. The population does not exceed 150 Muhammedans, some of whom are

negroes who have migrated here from Sheikh Sa'ad; the people are good-natured and hospitable, and very ready to give any information required. Round the southern and south-eastern foot of the hill are traces of a fortification wall, built of great basalt blocks. Above this runs a second wall, and a little below the summit again are traces of a third. They have all the appearance of a great antiquity, and

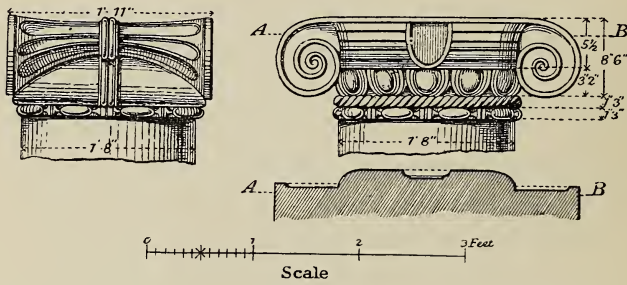


FIG. 105.

have served to protect the north-eastern, eastern, and southern slopes of the hill. The western side of the hill falls so abruptly off into the Wâdy Ehreir (known also here under the name of Wâdy Tell el Ash'ary) that the almost perpendicular cliffs preclude the necessity of any artificial fortification. The village is reached by two steep paths which go up the eastern slopes, across the old walls and rubbish-heaps. Of ancient architecture the only remains I found was the capital of an Ionic column (Fig. 105), which was lying among hewn and unhewn building-

stones on the eastern slope of the hill. The present village is modern, but it evidently occupies the site of a former town, which in its turn covered the remains of still earlier habitations. Near the base of the hill on the east is a large pile of weather-worn stones, crowning a round hillock. It is called by the villagers El Hummâm and also El Mughârah, and was probably the site of an ancient temple. The ruin has the double name, they say, because in old days—being supplied with water from near the bridge of the Ehreir—it served as a bath, and hence was called 'El Hummâm;' but afterwards coming to be used as a mausoleum by the Caliphs of the Beni Omeiyah, whose treasures are still buried there, the people gave it the name of 'El Mughârah,' or 'the Cave.' Not having been able to excavate, however, I was unable to ascertain whether there was any foundation of truth in this latter statement. Some hundred yards south of the mound a depression in the ground is occupied by the *Bahret el Ash'ary*, 'the Pool of El Ash'ary.' It is a marsh in winter, and a perennial stream flows from it to the Wâdy el Ehreir, turning on its course the Tawâhîn el Biariât (mills). This Bahret is surrounded by scattered remains, as though it had formerly been bordered by buildings, and the ruins extend up to the foot of the hill of El Ash'ary. Here evidently, from its extent, must be the site of an ancient city.

The stones are as a rule large in size, but among them are many small ones; they are unhewn, and in the order still preserved the plan of former buildings can often be recognised. Near the northern border of the lake or marsh is found a monolith of basalt, which has the shape of an irregular pyramid; it is about 7 feet high and is

Monolith of Basalt at the Bahret el Ash'ary



FIG. 106.

5 feet square at the base (Fig. 106). On its southern side, and facing the Bahret el Ash'ary, is cut an Arabic inscription, of which only the beginning is now legible. It runs:

نشهد لا اله الا الله

وخدامه محمد رسول الله

('We testify that there is no God but Allah . . . . and His servants. Muḥammad is the Apostle of Allah . . . .'), the remainder being totally defaced.

The extent of the remains proves that the ruins of

Tell el Ash'ary must be the site of what was an important city in ancient days, with an acropolis on the hill above, lying north of the town. Mr. Lawrence Oliphant has given it as his opinion that we have here the site of the Biblical Ashtaroth Karnaim ('The Land of Gilead,' pp. 88-96), a view in which I concur. The monolith bearing an Arabic inscription would go to prove that the spot was held sacred in Muhammedan times also; a Moslem saint, as is so often the case, taking the place of the more ancient Phœnician Baal. Further, the name of El Ash'ary, which attaches itself to what is evidently the ruin of a large city, on the south of the Tell el Ash'ary, gives plausibility to its identification with Ashtaroth, and disposes of the objection thereto raised by Consul Wetzstein, who says that he found no ruins near here large enough to answer to the remains of so considerable a city..

The Tell, fortified by a triple wall and the natural cliffs, would have been the acropolis, containing the temple devoted to the worship of Ashtaroth, while the city itself occupied the land all round it on the plain below. The remains cover a considerable extent of ground, and the ruins of mills and canals can be followed nearly as far as El 'Ajamy, $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles away to the south-west. The traces of buildings show the general character of the old architecture of Haurân.

A plentiful supply of water is found both on the plain and in the gorge of the Ehreir, which goes round the western foot of the Tell, the stream forming cascades between high perpendicular cliffs. I attach some importance to the fact that the present name bears the Arabic article 'El' before the word 'Ash'ary;' for I hold this indicates that the hill was named after some hero or god. The name of Tell 'Ashtarah (see below), $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the north, being without article, this place is the less likely to be the ancient Ashtaroth, and it is in every way the inferior of Tell el Ash'ary in the size and extent of its ruins. Also the double peak of the southern summit of the latter hill, formed by the depression running from north to south, would make the appellation of 'Karnaim,' or 'Double-horned,' extremely appropriate, and this feature must have been still more distinct before the depression was filled in by the rubbish and detritus. Excavation on the summit and near the foot of the hill at the 'Hummâm,' or 'Mughârah,' would without doubt bring to light some remains that must definitely settle the question whether or not this be the site of the Biblical Ashtaroth. Tell el Ash'ary stands 1,551 feet above sea; and on the 6th of September the temperature in the morning, at 5.40, was 55° Fahr.; at 8.25 it was 75°; and at 10 a.m., 84°. A little dew had fallen during the night, which had

been very cold. The land round the ruins is free from stones, and the soil in the neighbourhood is extremely fertile.

Tell 'Ashtarah.—This hill lies $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of Tell el Ash'ary, and occupies an isolated position in the plain, with the plentiful stream of the Moyet en Neby Ayyûb flowing round its base. Its summit rises to about 80 feet above the surrounding country; the plateau on the top being smaller in extent than that of Tell el Ash'ary. This is now covered by the sheepfolds built out of the scattered stones that once belonged to the buildings of a small village. There are also traces of fortification surrounding the southern and south-western foot of the hill. Originally these continued round the whole elevation, and included in their circuit a rectangular building which stands at the southern extremity of the Tell, near the plain. The stones are rude and large, similar to those at Tell el Ash'ary, and have every appearance of belonging to the same early period. The ruins, however, are not sufficiently extensive to be those of a large city, and in general appearance, the remains at Tell 'Ashtarah are certainly much less imposing than are those at Tell el Ash'ary. It is, however, not unlikely that here may have been the site of the Biblical city of Ashtaroth, which we know stood not far from Ashtaroth Karnaim. The small ruin of Khurbet en Nîleh is

seen in the plain a short distance to the south-west of the hill.

Tuffas.—A village of some size, situated, like El Mezeirîb, in a depression. It contains about 100 stone houses, some of which are in ruins, and the rest are occupied by a population of about 250 Muhammedans. In the extreme west of the village are the Mêdany and Jâm'aah. The *Mêdany* (Fig. 107) is a tower 10 feet square at the base, and

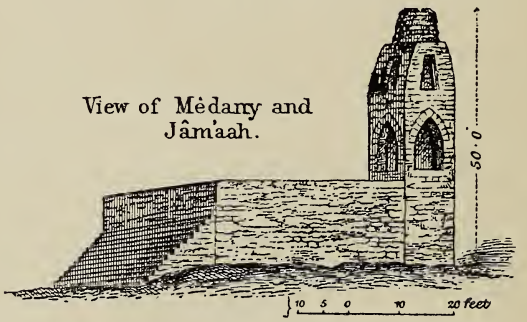


FIG. 107.

about 50 feet high, still in tolerable preservation. It has two stories, with windows looking out on each side, those in the lower storey having pointed arches, while above the windows are square topped, with sides which are parallel with the outer walls, for the tower above has the form of a truncated pyramid. The roof is flat, and on it is a cairn of stones built up rudely without architectural finish, and apparently modern.

On the western side of the tower is the Jâm'aah (Fig. 108), a rectangular building, measuring 46 feet

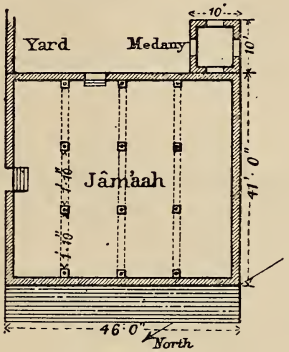


FIG. 108.

from north-east to south-west, and 41 feet from north-west to south-east, with a sort of terrace of steps added to its north-western side, as in the Jâm'aah at Ed Dera'ah. The paved floor of the Jâm'aah lies 3 feet below the surrounding level. The roof is supported by three rows of columns, which are twelve in number: two columns in each row stand out in the floor, while the end ones are built into the wall. Above the columns are round atches of 11 feet 10 inches span. The shafts of the columns have an average height of 5 feet, and sometimes double capitals and double bases, placed one above the other, have been needed in order to obtain the required height. From the floor to the spring of the arch is 9 feet 5 inches, and

this, with 5 feet 6 inches as height of the arch itself, and 1 foot for the stones above, gives a total height for the interior of the Jâm'aah of 15 feet 11 inches (Fig. 109). The construction is very evidently modern, and every column has a different base and

Arcades of Jâm'aah.

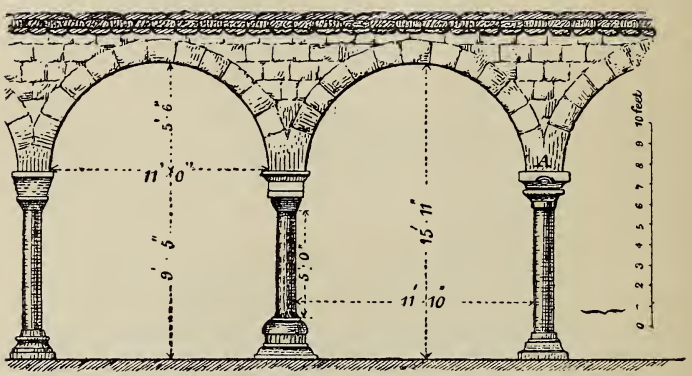


FIG. 109.

a different capital, and they are set up with no regard to architectural rule or symmetry. The mouldings are Roman in style, but modified somewhat, as is always the case in the Haurân, and without doubt originally formed part of a Christian church. On one of the capitals as shown at A in Fig. 110, a peculiar eye-shaped ornament is found. The ceiling of the present Jâm'aah is formed of basalt slabs. The whole construction has evidently been built during Muhammedan times from materials of an earlier

date. In the north wall there is a square door, above which on the lintel is cut the beginning of a verse from the Kor'ân :

لا اله الا الله . . . .
. . . . حمد الله . . . .

"There is no God but Allah . . . .
. . . . Praise be to Allah . . . ."

The remainder is now defaced. Steps lead from the exterior down into the mosque. There is a

Capital on a column.
(A.)

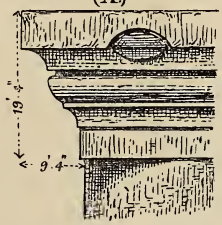


FIG. 110.

second door in the east near the tower, where there are still some traces of a courtyard. The whole building is in a good state of preservation, and is used for prayer.

The sheikh's house at Tuffas, near the Jâm'aah, is an ancient building, which, to judge by the large well-squared stones of which its walls are built, and the style of architecture of the southern façade, must originally have been a Christian church or

monastery. The centre building consists of a chamber about 18 feet square and 19 feet high, divided into two parts by a round arch very like that in the house of the sheikh at Sahem ej Jaulân (see p. 94). A door and two small windows occupy the south wall. On the face of every second voussoir of the arch (above the capitals of the arch pier) is a bas-relief of peculiar and original appearance. Thus on the west, one stone, 2 feet 4 inches wide and 1 foot 9 inches high, has an ornamentation of vine branches, with the representation of an arcade in between (Fig. 111); and on the stone

Ornamented Arch Stones of Tuffas, Sheikh's house

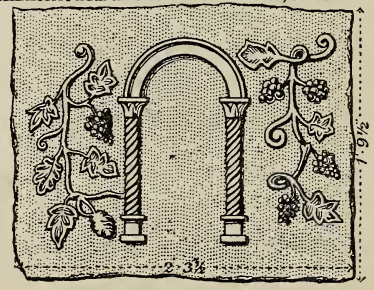


FIG. 111.

opposite, which is of the same size, are branches of a fig-tree, with a wreath (Fig. 112). The ceiling is carefully constructed of basalt slabs, supported on corbels. At the south-western corner the corbel has a large acanthus-leaf (Fig. 113) carved on it, which corresponds, as to position, with the arrow

found cut in the corner-stone of the house at Sahem ej Jaulân (see p. 196). Right and left of

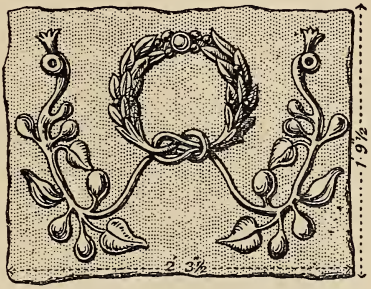


FIG. 112.

the central chamber are others, now used for stables and for guest-rooms, but their walls are plastered and now so blackened with smoke that no ornamentation is visible, even should any exist. Fig. 114

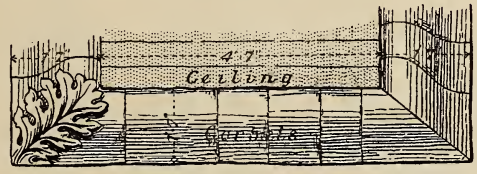


FIG. 113.

shows the façade of the south wall of the central room just described, with its fine doorway. Remains of a flying staircase, the steps of which project from the wall, lead up to the flat roof.

On the lintel and jambs of another door in the

same wall, to the right of the above, are the ornamentations shown in Fig. 115.

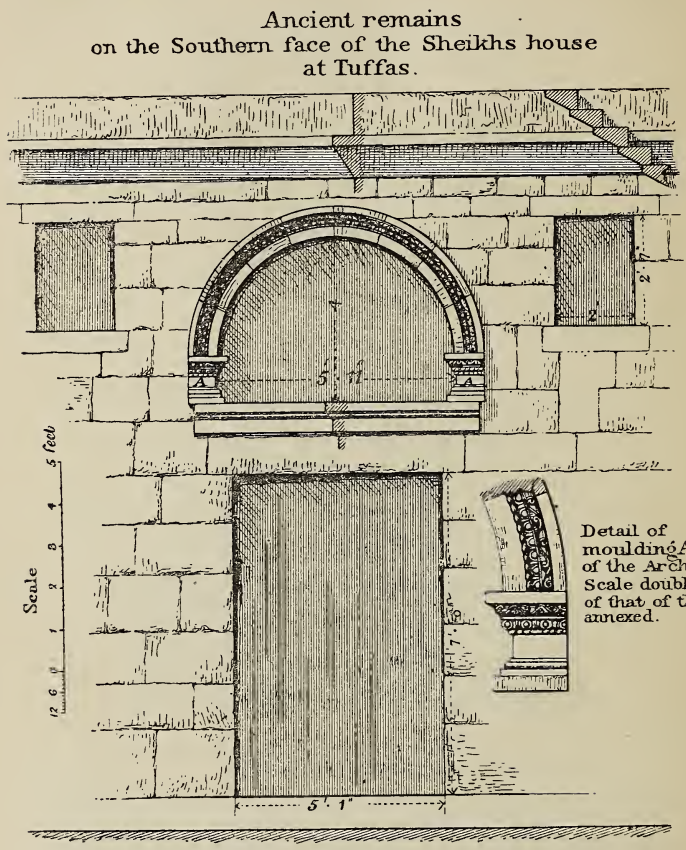


FIG. 114.

The main building is surrounded by a yard, within which are several modern dwellings, occupied by

the sheikh's Harîm. Hewn stones are built into the walls, and doubtless many other ancient remains might be discovered were not the stones of the walls

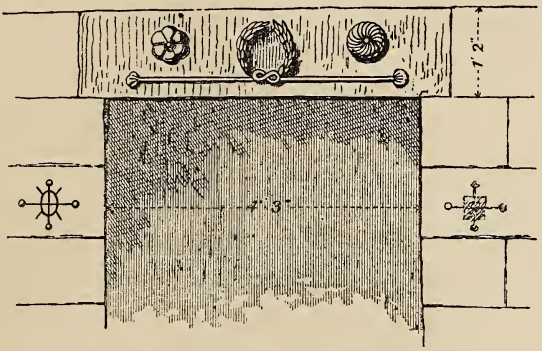


FIG. 115.

concealed by being covered with plaster. A carefully built gateway, surmounted by a large lintel block, forms the entrance into the yard from the

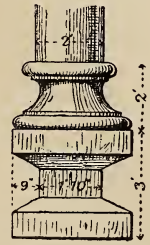


FIG. 116.



FIG. 117.

east. In the yard lies a column with a base of Roman character (Fig. 116). In the north wall of a house is a stone with a Greek inscription (Fig.

117); and carved on the lintels over the two doors at this side of the building are the crosses shown in Fig. 118. The only building-stone used in Tuffas is basalt. Besides the ornaments shown in the foregoing figures, we found here and there in the walls of the houses many others, all of the same Roman-Haurân type; and we often noticed when walking along the streets ancient walls still standing and built of hewn stones. The old town extended very considerably eastwards, as seen from the ruins, and their extent proves that Tuffas was originally a large city. On the north there is a natural birket or basin, called *El M'asab*, 50 by 25 yards across, which remains filled with muddy rain-water the whole year round.

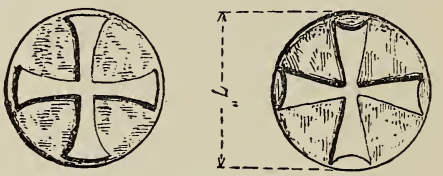


FIG. 118.

Tawâhîn el Arshediyât, Tawâhîn el Biariât.—Corn-mills near Tell el Ash'ary. The stream, after leaving them, flows down the slopes of the Ehreir, and fosters a fine growth of cane-jungle.

Tawâhîn Sabîhah, T. el Wâdy, T. ej Jalûfy wa Zakzûk, and *Tâhûnet Abu Dâliyeh.*—Corn-mills, situated on the slopes and in the Wâdy el Ehreir, near Tell el Ash'ary.

The abundance of water in the wâdy, as well as on its upper slopes, gives the whole vicinity of Tell el Ash'ary a very green and agreeable appearance.

Tâhûnet Umm Bâbeîn, Tâhûnet es Sufukîyeh, Tawâhîn el Mughr.—Corn-mills, turned by the powerful stream coming from the *'Ain Sufukîyeh*, near the Wâdy ej Jebeleh, which lies on the eastern bank of the Nahr el 'Allân. These mills are of extremely primitive construction. Each grinding-stone, of basalt, occupies a small cavern reached by a single entrance—the Tâhûnet Umm Bâbeîn formerly had two gates, as its name implies—and these are so concealed by the jungle of cane as to be quite invisible at a short distance, unless attention be called to them. The water is conducted from above, passes through the jungle, disappearing and reappearing four separate times, working the mills, which are situated one below the other. The stream finally flows into the 'Allân, at a point where a thick growth of oleanders and cane covers the slopes.

Tâhûnet el Midyab.—Two ruined mills, one at Taiyibet Lism, the other lower down in the Wâdy el Lubwah. They are the property of the powerful Midyab family of Nawâ.

Tell 'Ameidûn el Fôkâneh, the western, and *Tell 'Ameidûn et Tahtâneh*, the eastern, of a couple of isolated hills, lying between Tsîl and Sahem ej Jaulân. On their summits are several large squared

stones, apparently of great age, which are the remains of former buildings.

Tell Buruk.—Scattered ruins covering a small hill in the plain, 1½ miles south-west of 'Adwân.

Et Tîreh.—A small ruined and deserted village. Its houses are built round a square, and are all of stone, some being still in a habitable state. Those on the west are more modern. On the other sides are numerous chambers, half subterranean, half above ground, very similar to those found at Khurbet

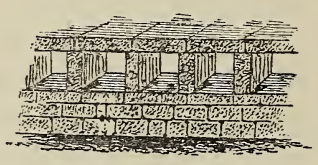


FIG. 119.

Samakh (p. 183), but smaller. They are from 6 to 8 feet wide, and from 10 to 20 feet long; and the walls having been built without mortar, are now in many cases fallen in. In a kind of corridor which runs along the north side of the square, and also in some of the chambers, are seen mangers, similar to those found so often in Western Jaulân, and especially in the underground city of Ed Dera'ah. They are built of stone, being 2 feet square and 2 feet high, and placed 2 feet above the ground, being separated one from another by an upright slab (Fig. 119). On the broken lintel of a square door,

4 feet high, opening into one of these ruined and partly subterranean chambers, lying to the north of the courtyard, was the following Greek inscription:

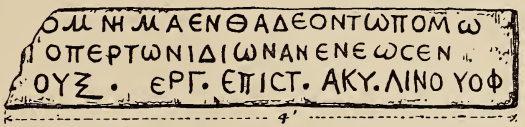


FIG. 120.

Et Tîreh means 'the Castle,' and the name would lead one to conclude that the place, although now only tenanted by 'Ahsênîyehs,' or Syrian foxes, must formerly have been a fortified town. There is a plentiful supply of water in the country round about, but as it forms marshes it renders the place unhealthy.

Tell es Seif.—A hill, a mile east of Et Tîreh.

Tell es Semen stands a mile to the south of this again. It is a larger hill than the Tell el Ash'ary, and has on it many stone sheep-folds among other ruins, but its summit is bare. Its slopes run down to the Wâdy el Ehreir.

Taiyibet Lism.—The ruins are here piled up in disorder, as though from the effect of an earthquake; there are the remains of a mill in the west, situated on the Wâdy el Lubwah. The stones found here are unhewn and very much weathered. The village must have been overthrown now many years ago.

Tsîl.—A large village, crowning an elevation, to the south of which are immense manure-heaps. The greater number of the houses, which are built of stone and mud, are now deserted and in ruins. About 90 are inhabited by a population numbering some 300 souls, exclusively Muhammedans. The arable land round Tsîl is extensive, but in part not easily cultivated; the tracts lying to the west and north being stony. On the north-west are some vineyards. Its only water-supply is derived from a pool 50 yards square, lying to the north, surrounded by rocks, and called '*El Birkeh.*' In years of plentiful rainfall the Birkeh retains a supply of muddy rain-water all through the year; but in dry seasons the inhabitants are obliged to go for their water to the 'Allân, which is two miles away on the west. A spring, which is the source of the stream in the Wâdy esh Shefeil, lies to the north-west of the village, and formerly gave a plentiful supply of water; but of late years this has been constantly diminishing in volume, and at the present time gives but little water during the autumn months. Owing to this scarcity of water, the village, which in the beginning of the century was flourishing, is now in a decaying condition. The inhabitants in their manners are not unfriendly, but they are extremely apathetic, and neither threats nor promises will stir them up. The only brisk conversation is that

heard among the women who go for water to the Birkeh. I was told that the people of Tsîl were generally considered to be of a thieving disposition, and hence caravans avoid, if possible, passing the night here; but I had no complaint to make against them on this score. A number of scattered ruins lie to the west of the town, also the large dolmen-fields which have been already described (see p. 149). In the interior of the village most of the relics of antiquity have been built up into the walls, and are now hidden by the plastering. They have here a superstition that the Fellâh who gives any stone of a mosque to a foreigner will be punished for it by Allah, either by death or by a misfortune in his house; and as they consider all architectural remains to have formed portions of old mosques, they decline to give any information about such stones unless they happen to be found in the sites of deserted houses. Exceptions to this rule exist, for some of the Fellahîn are already, according to a German expression, 'culturbeleckt.'

The only buildings of interest and antiquity in Tsîl are the *Jâm'aah* and *Mêdany*. They stand together near the sheikh's house. Entering the building (Fig. 121), broad steps lead down into a courtyard, which is 53 feet long and 31 feet broad, and of which the level is two yards below the roadway. It lies to the east of the Jâm'aah. The walls round

the courtyard are 3 feet thick, built without mortar, as is usual in Haurân. The basalt stone found here, also, is easily split, and does not need to be shaped

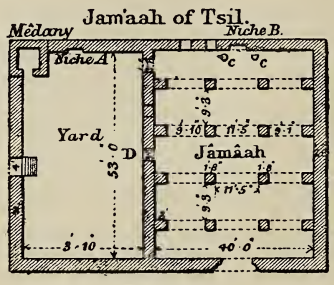


FIG. 121.

with the chisel. In the south-east corner of the area is the Mêdany, a tower resembling the ones already described in the sections on Ed Dera'ah, Tuffas and Nawâ. The plan is 9 feet 3 inches square, with a square doorway from the north. The walls slope inwards, as in the buildings before described; but all the upper part is now in ruins, and the tower is only about 20 feet high. The peculiarity in the Mêdany of Tsîl is that it is supported below, or rather is built, on three free-standing basaltic columns, each 5 feet high, 1 foot 9 inches in diameter, and having capitals, but no bases. One of the columns further has two capitals, which are placed most incongruously one on the top of the other (Fig. 122). These columns must have come from a more ancient building, and were set here

either at the time of the construction of the tower, or else have been placed as buttresses or supports under the walls of the Mêdany when it first began

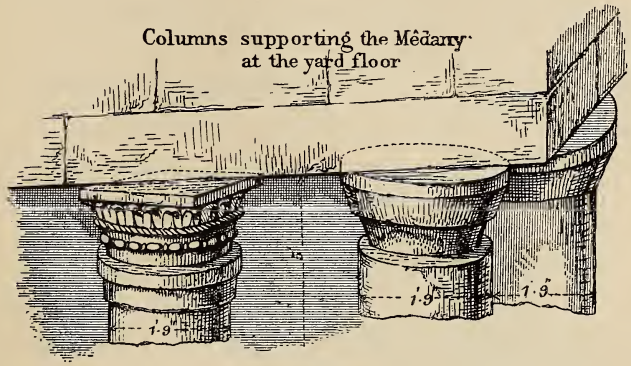


FIG. 122.

to fall to ruin. Basalt slabs are laid across the tops of the columns, and on these the tower walls are built. Into the south wall of the court (at

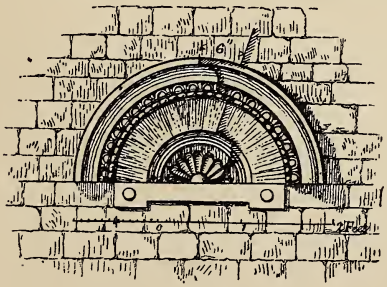


FIG. 123.

A in the plan), the semicircular stone of a niche (Fig. 123) has been built, but this is evidently not

its original place. On its western side the court is bounded by the wall of the Jâm'aah, which is entered through two doorways. One of these (D in the plan, and Fig. 124), is 5 feet high, and on the

Door D of the Jâmâah

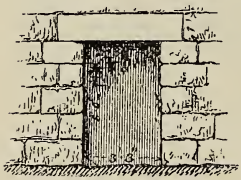


FIG. 124.

Arcades of the Jâmâah

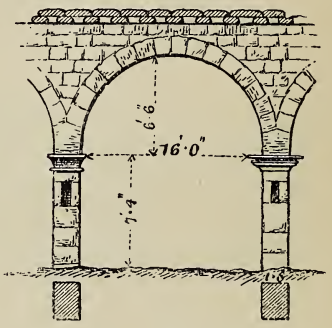


FIG. 125.

ground 3 feet 3 inches wide, but is 3 feet 1 inch only under the horizontal lintel, for the sides slope inwards. The second door is 3 inches wider. The Jâm'aah itself measures 53 feet from north to south, and 40 feet from east to west. The walls are 2 feet 6 inches thick, and the roof is supported by four rows of square pillars, four in the row; of these eight stand free, and eight are built into the walls. They are spanned above by circular arches, and what may be called the nave is 11 feet 5 inches across, the eastern aisle being 9 feet 10 inches, and the western 9 feet 1 inch wide. The pillars are, as before mentioned, square, and measure on an

average 1 foot 8 inches across by 2 feet 5 inches side; while those which form pilasters project 3 feet from the walls; they are 7 feet 4 inches high. The pillars all have square capitals, each one being different in shape and moulding from its neighbour (Fig. 125 *a*), and they are without bases. The pillars are not monoliths, but built up in several pieces. In many of them, in the stones forming the second drum

Capitals of Arcade piers of Jâma'ah.

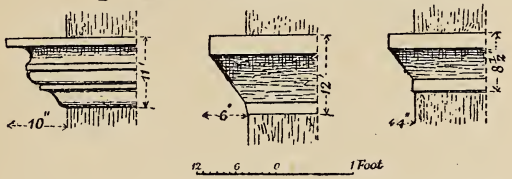


FIG. 125 *a*.

below the capital (see Fig. 125) a space is left of the height of a course, and this varies from 2 inches up to 1 foot 7 inches wide. The roof of the mosque is formed of rude basalt slabs, 6 and 7 feet long, resting on corbels. In the southern wall is a niche (B in the plan, and Fig. 126) of rectangular plan, 6 feet 6 inches high, 3 feet 10 inches wide at the bottom, and 3 feet 3 inches at the imposts. It is surmounted by a round arch, supported on a couple of pillars with square capitals. The niche is built in a very careless and rough manner. In the floor near it are two fine pillars with Ionic capitals (C, C in plan, Fig. 121, also

Fig. 127) which stand up above the rubbish some 3 feet high, and formerly must have adorned the sides of a niche, the upper part of which was probably the

Niche B



FIG. 126.

Columns C of the Jâm'aah

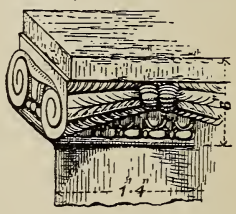


FIG. 127.

stone built into the south wall of the courtyard (at A, and Fig. 123). The Jâm'aah has small rectangular windows in the walls, 10 and 12 feet above the rubbish on the floor. There are two in the south wall, to the left of the niche, and another between the two doors on the east; they are about 2 feet high and 1 foot 5 inches wide. The interior height of the Mosque from the rubbish on the floor to the ceiling, is 16 feet; it has been restored in its northern part, but although in better preservation than was any other Jâm'aah that I visited, it is beginning now to fail to ruin. A stone carved with the Vitruvian scroll moulding is built into the eastern wall of the Jâm'aah, and one bearing on it a curious pattern in relief, shown in Fig. 128, is found over the gate of the sheikh's house. The Jâm'aah, which is of purely Moslem architecture, must have been raised

on the site of some more ancient building, a church, or perhaps a synagogue, as there is no trace of cross or other Christian ornament to be seen.

In the sheikh's yard we found a broken stone with

Ornament on the gateway of the Sheikh's house.

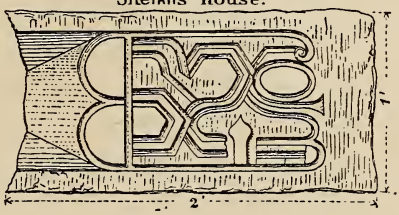


FIG. 128.

part of a Greek inscription cut into it (Fig. 129); and also the drum of a twisted column in basalt (Fig. 130). Besides these fragments, we often noticed, in the yards of the other houses, large Ionic



FIG. 129.

Column in the Sheikh's house.

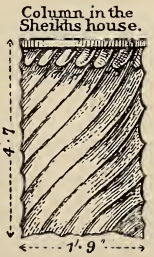


FIG. 130.

capitals, now much weather-worn and defaced; and interesting ruins are possibly buried below the dunghills, of which Tsîl has such an abundance.

Tsîl lies 1,722 feet above the sea; and on the morning of 12th September, 1884, at 5.35, the thermometer registered 62° Fahr., while at 10 o'clock it had reached 89°, for the hot wind was blowing.

Tell ej Jemû'ah.—A well-cultivated hill, lying between Nawâ and Tsîl. Its summit is 2,024 feet above the Mediterranean, and rises about 350 feet above the plain; it therefore commands an excellent view over the whole country—south, west, and east, as far as the Jebel ed Drûs of the Haurân, and down to the hills of 'Ajlûn, which are shut off by the wide Wâdy esh Shelâleh.

A fertile valley slopes gently up to the Tell ej Jâbiyeh from the Tell ej Jemû'ah northwards, and in the north-west extends to the Tell el Farras. The highest summit of the Tell ej Jemû'ah is that lying to the north. Its name, Tell ej Jemû'ah, signifies 'the Hill of Meeting,' and is so called from it being the recognised battle-ground of the Bedawin (see above, 'Arab el 'Anazeh, p. 104). It marks also, roughly, the limit between the grazing-grounds of the 'Anazeh and the Nû'em tribes.

Tell ej Jâbiyeh.—The most conspicuous point in all the country round. It is a hill with two peaks the eastern and highest of which reaches an elevation of 2,322 feet above the sea. It commands a fine view over Northern Haurân and Jedûr.

Tellûl el Hesh.—A range of volcanic cliffs, north-east of Nawâ.

Wâdy el Meddan.—Dry in summer, but bearing a considerable amount of water in winter. The stream is said to rise in the Jebel ed Drûs; it passes El Yedûdeh, where it is called the *Wâdy ed Dahab*, and only takes the name of Wâdy el Meddan below this. It joins the Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb.

Wâdy Khreiyân.—Runs dry in summer. It rises in the east of Haurân, and in winter feeds the Bahret el Bajjeh. A small bridge of modern construction crosses it, a little south of El Mezeirîb.

El Yedûdeh.—A miserable-looking village, formerly of some importance, but now consisting of about forty huts, built of stone and mud, containing not above 150 inhabitants. In the south-western part is a small Jâm'aah, now totally ruined and apparently not very ancient. The ceiling was originally formed

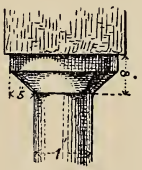


FIG. 131.

of basalt slabs; and these were supported on small columns, now prostrate, 1 foot in diameter, with low capitals worked to the shafts (Fig. 131). There are

also broken stone doors with stone pivots. North of the Jâm'aah is a small square building, now also in ruins, apparently the lower part of a Mêdany, or tower. In its walls is an ornamented stone, which

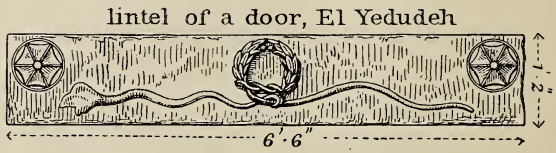


FIG. 132.

must originally have formed the lintel over a door (Fig. 132). Above the door of the Jâm'aah, which is 3 feet 3 inches wide, is a slab 6 feet 6 inches long, bearing a peculiar leaf ornamentation (Fig. 133).

Near the sheikh's house, to the north of the village, are strewn about many hewn stones of



FIG. 133.



FIG. 134.

basalt 6 and 7 feet long and 2 feet high, and some are built into the walls of the courtyard. Many of these are engraved with crosses (Fig. 134), and on

others there is the Vitruvian scroll. One slab is 8 feet long and 10 inches high, but now broken. It must formerly have been the lintel of a gate, and the hole for a stone pivot still exists in it (Fig. 135). From the style of the ornamentation, I conclude that a large Christian building must have existed here. The walls of the sheikh's dwelling are now plastered over, but if this coating were removed, without doubt other ornamentations, and possibly inscriptions would appear. The people are not very friendly.

A short distance outside the village, to the north-

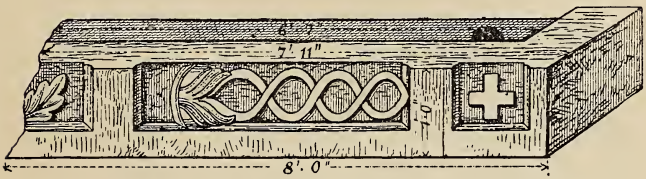


FIG. 135.

west, a dam is thrown across the Wâdy ed Dahab, by which the water from above was originally diverted into a Birkeh, or large basin, cut in the rocks. The dam itself, at its lowest part, is 8 feet 6 inches wide, and above is 5 feet 3 inches across. It is built of stone set in mortar, large rude blocks of basalt being used, but it is now in ruin. A small channel still runs from the dam to the Birkeh, which is excavated in the live rock, being faced with masonry and plastered over, for the remains

of the plaster are still found. The Birkeh is in the form of an irregular square, measuring about 30 feet across, and is 23 feet deep. The channel ran into the basin from the west, and in places had to be supported by pillars. These are cut out of slabs of basalt, about 16 feet high, and 1 foot 5 inches

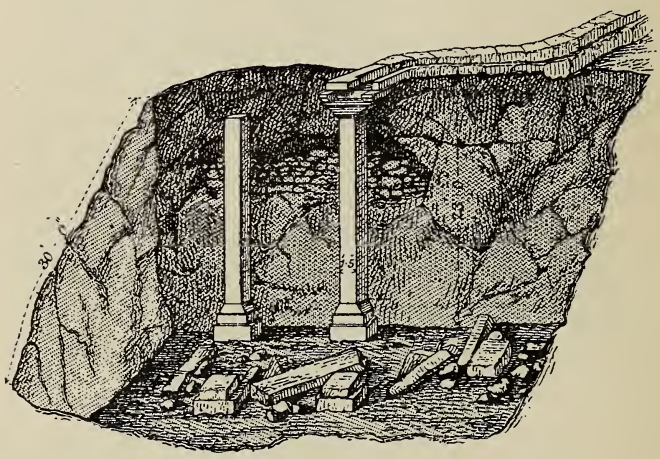


FIG. 136.

square, with a capital and a base. The Birkeh was originally covered in with basalt slabs, as is proved by the great amount of rubbish, consisting of portions of slabs and broken corbels, which now lies in heaps at the bottom of the basin; and this roofing was supported by pillars similar to those before described, the fragments of which still occupy the centre of the basin (Fig. 136). As late as the

month of August the Birkeh still holds rain-water.

Yublah.—A deserted village consisting of uninhabited and partially ruined mud and stone huts, situated on the Wâdy Kefr es Sâmir, near the Ehreir. There are many modern and ancient buildings, and the village not long since must have been inhabited, and was evidently a place of some importance. At the present day the Bedawin use the huts as shelter for their flocks.

Zeizûn.—A village occupying the two sides of the *Bahret Zeizûn*, which is formed by the Moyet Zeizûn, where the waters spread out into a small lake. The northern quarter is situated on an elevation, and is the most important. To the north of this again there are gardens containing pomegranates, figs, and other fruit trees, which are irrigated from the Wâdy el 'Ajamy. Not long ago the village was in a very flourishing condition, but a blood-feud in which the sheikh was involved, the Bedawin being the offended parties, has forced many of the villagers, together with the sheikh and his relations, to flee for their lives to Tell esh Shehâb (see p. 202). The present population consists of about 200 Muhammedans, some of whom are negroes, who occupy about fifty-five miserable huts, built as a rule of stone.

The sheikh's house and courtyard, in the northern part of the town, is well built, but has now been

left to fall to ruin. The villagers are timid and unfriendly in manner to strangers. Zeizûn must

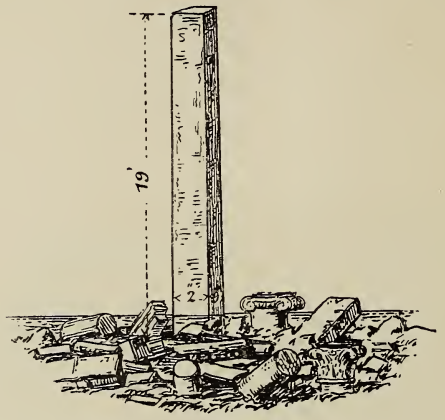


FIG. 137.

have been an important place in ancient times. There are remains of fine cornices, lying among

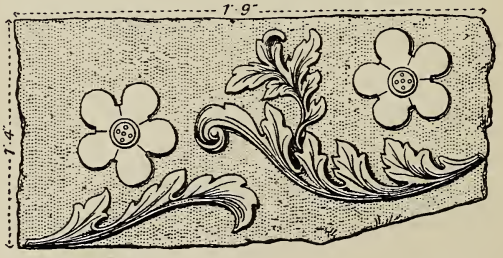


FIG. 138.

prostrate columns and Corinthian capitals, with the broken parts of rich entablatures, all apparently of

Roman workmanship. Stones bearing on them Vitruvian scrolls and rosettes, exceedingly well carved, are to be found in many places, and are especially numerous in the bed of the stream. In the eastern part of the Bahret, where the Moyet Zeizûn expands to a width of about 25 feet, and is about a foot deep, is an isolated column of basalt

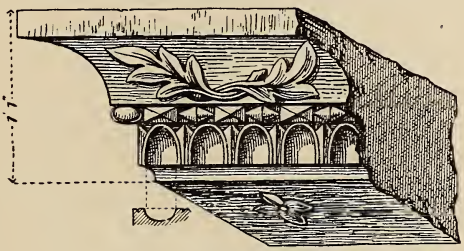


FIG. 139.

(Fig. 137), which stands up vertically in the middle of the stream. It has a height of 19 feet, is square in cross-section, and is well cut. About its base in the stream are piles of large building-stones, also Roman cornices, fine Corinthian capitals ornamented with the acanthus-leaf, and portions of columns, 1 foot 7 inches and 2 feet in diameter. The remains, which are all of basalt, would seem to have formed part of a Roman bath. There is no bridge across the stream, and the numerous fragments render the passage through the water somewhat dangerous for animals. On the northern bank are found the slabs of a richly-ornamented

frieze (Fig. 138), and entablature with concave egg-shaped ornamentation (Fig. 139); also the upper part of a small pilaster in basalt (Fig. 140), the column of which is 8 inches in diameter, with a

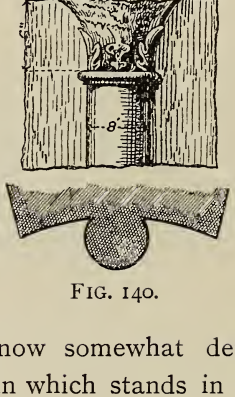


FIG. 140.

pretty capital, now somewhat defaced. A little below the column which stands in the stream, and on the west, are traces of a building now entirely in ruins: its foundations are in the water, and it was probably a mill. Running from the upper or eastern part of the stream are aqueducts, well built, and rectangular in section, 2 feet 7 inches high, and 1 foot 4 inches wide, and covered in with slabs of basalt; these take the water to the southern part of Zeizûn. On a lintel above the entrance of one of these aqueducts, which runs below a modern building, is found carved a Greek inscription, shown in Fig. 141. The people of Zeizûn assured me that

these aqueducts run under all the southern half of the town, below the level of the houses, but that they no longer hold water. In this southern part of the village, and to the west and south-west, are considerable remains of ancient buildings. Beyond this

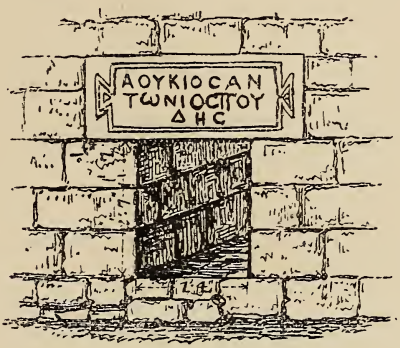


FIG. 141.

they form mounds, and cover the plain as far as the steep cliffs of the Wâdy Tell esh Shehâb. The inhabitants had near here thrown away numbers of old copper coins, which were found among the ruins, 'because they would not pass for money at the Sûk of El Mezeirîb.' A search soon brought to light several; they were all Roman, and had the appearance of dating from early Christian times.

Across the stream, and in the northern part of Zeizûn, two other Greek inscriptions were found, built into the gate of the sheikh's house or

'Menzûl,' they are evidently Christian (Figs. 142, 143). The ruins known under the name of Beit er Râs have hitherto by archæologists been identified with

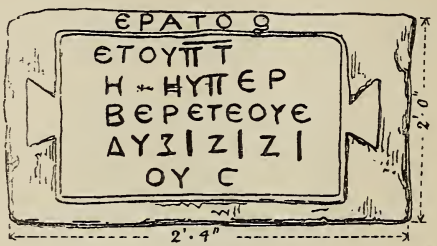


FIG. 142.

the site of the ancient Capitolias. I venture, however, to suggest that *Zeizûn* more probably represents this



FIG. 143.

lost capital. I am led to this opinion chiefly by the extraordinary quantity of rich Roman carvings found here, also by the considerable extent of the ruins, and the water-supply conducted through aqueducts of Roman structure. The situation of *Zeizûn* on, or rather very near, the Yarmûk or Hieromax,

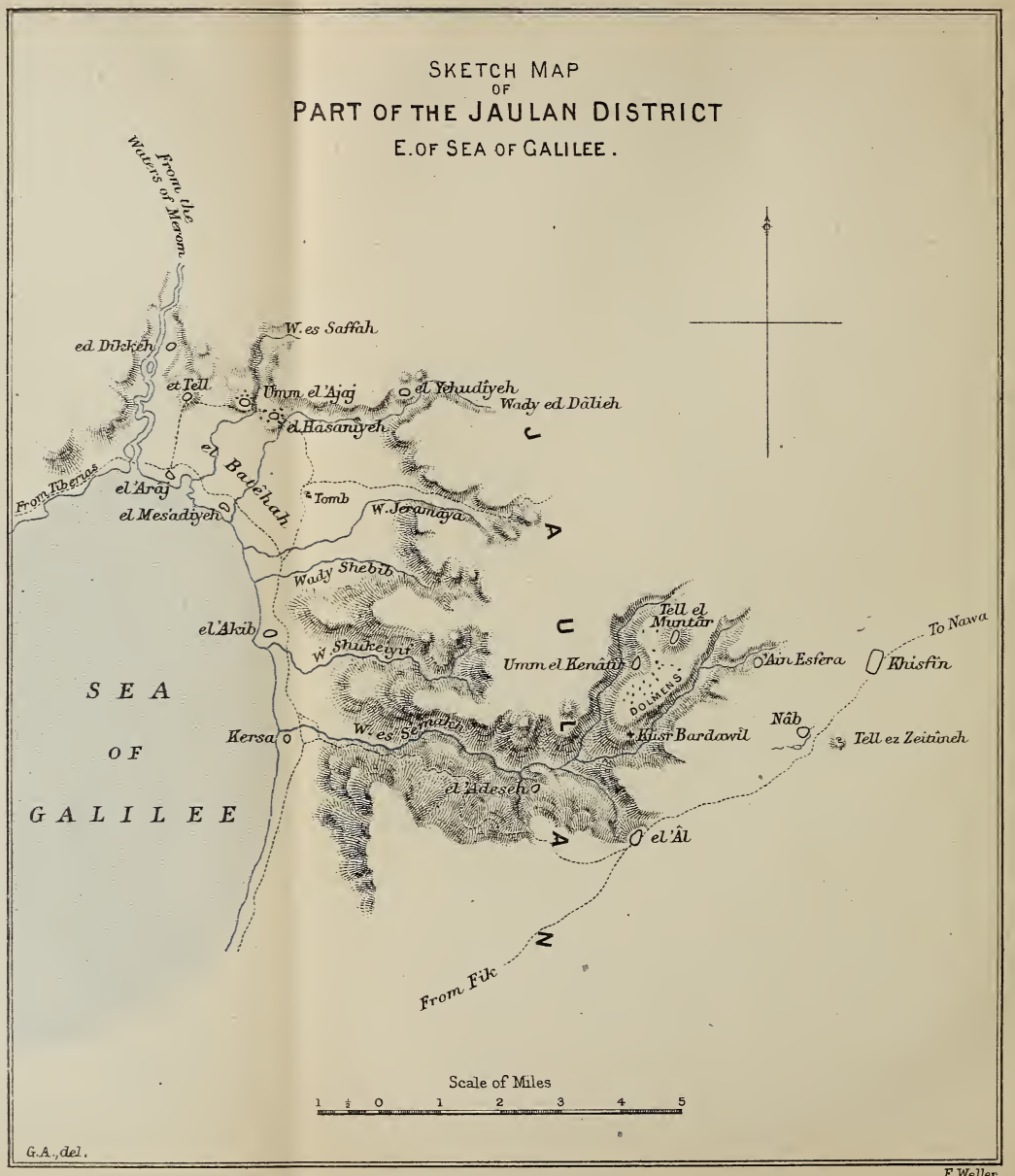
and just above a waterfall, agrees very well with what we know of the position of Capitolias. The question, however, would be set beyond a doubt were excavations possible.

The foregoing pages give the information obtained during a survey of that part of the country lying to the east of the Jordan, which was formerly included in the limits of the half tribe of Manasseh. The positions laid down on the map were fixed by the theodolite; and the villages and ruins were photographed and sketched as thoroughly as the time at my disposal would permit. For the primary object of my visit to the country was not archæological, but was connected with a survey for the line of railway to run from Haifa to Damascus, through the Haurân. The district, however, has now been mapped, and the ruins to some extent examined; but I am far from wishing to convey the idea that I hold the country to be thoroughly explored, or that its ruins have all been examined. I have found on the occasion of subsequent trips into Haurân and Jaulân that I always gained some fresh information, new names cropping up, and facts of interest coming to notice; and the country is so rich in antiquarian and archæological remains that a

survey to be thoroughly exhaustive would in truth occupy many years. I trust, therefore, that other occasions may arise which will give me opportunities for again visiting this interesting region. Meanwhile, in closing the present report, I beg to throw myself on the indulgence of my readers for the defects of style, and for such faults of composition as occur in its pages, for my work has been perforce written in a language which, though familiar to me, is not my own.

G. SCHUMACHER, C.E.

HAIFA, 1885.


SKETCH MAP
OF
PART OF THE JAULAN DISTRICT
E. OF SEA OF GALILEE.
From the Waters of Merom
ed Dikkeh
W. es Saffah
et Tell
Umm el 'Ajaj
el Yehudiyeh
Wady ed Dâlieh
el Hasaniyeh
el Baṭeîhah
From Tiberias
el 'Araj
el Mesadiyeh
Tomb
W. Jeramaya
Wady Shebib
el 'Akib
W. Shukeyyir
Tell el Muntar
To Nawa
Umm el Kenâtir
'Ain Esfera
Khisfin
SEA
OF
GALILEE
DOLMENS
Nâb
Kersa
W. es Sennâbrah
Kasr Bardawil
Tell ez Zeitineh
el 'Adeseh
el 'Âl
From Fik
JAULAN
Scale of Miles
1 ½ 0 1 2 3 4 5
G.A., del.
E. Weller.

A TRIP
TO THE
NORTH-EAST OF LAKE TIBERIAS, IN JAULAN.

By Laurence Oliphant.

The examination of the country to the east of the Jordan is, under existing conditions, attended with so much difficulty that I was glad to seize an opportunity which fell in my way of paying a visit to the northern and eastern shores of the Lake of Tiberias, and penetrating a short distance into Jaulân, with the view of visiting certain localities, where I had reason to believe that some ruins existed which had hitherto escaped observation. I was unfortunately prevented by circumstances from devoting to them the time and labour which they deserved, and in more than one instance, where it would have been interesting to linger, was compelled to hurry past places, with the mental reservation that I would endeavour to return, at some future time, for a more detailed examination.

I commenced my investigations immediately on

crossing the Jordan, at the point of its debouchure into the lake. Here, at a distance of half a mile east from its mouth, are situated the ruins of El 'Araj, which consists of foundations of old walls, and blocks of basaltic stone, cut and uncut, which have been used for building purposes. The ruins cover a limited area. A little over a mile north of El 'Araj there rises from the fertile plain of El Batîhah a mound strewn with blocks of stone, and other remains which cover a considerable area. This is Et Tell, a spot which it has been sought by more than one traveller to identify with Bethsaida Julias. I will not do more than touch here on the much-vexed question of whether there were two Bethsaidas, as insisted upon by Reland and many others, or only one. The question is, whether 'the desert place apart,' at which was performed the miracle of the five loaves and the two fishes, was on a desolate spur of the range immediately to the north of this Tell, which would necessitate two Bethsaidas; or whether it was, as Dr. Thomson supposes, at the north-east corner of the lake on the shoulder overhanging Mes'adiyeh, upon which assumption he constructs a theory which would involve only one Bethsaida; or finally whether, as suggested by Captain Conder, the Sinaitic Manuscript may not be right in omitting the definition (Luke ix. 10) of the desert where the 5,000 were fed, as 'belonging to the city called

Bethsaida,' in which case the necessity for a second city of that name ceases to exist, and the miracle may have been performed in the plain at the south-east of the lake. It is possible that excavations at Et Tell might enable us to decide positively whether or not it is the site of Bethsaida Julias, which we know was in this vicinity. A small native village has been built among the ruins, which do not at present afford to the passing traveller any indications of former magnificence; but I was unable at the time to examine them, as I was desirous of pushing on without delay to a spot where I was informed by a Bedawin sheikh who accompanied me from El 'Araj, that the fellahîn, in the course of getting out stone for constructing some houses last summer, had laid bare many stones on which were carvings and pictorial representations. After following the course of the Jordan, on its east bank, for another mile, we reached a spot on the barren slope of a hill a few hundred yards from the river, where some native huts had been recently built. Here large cut stones, carved cornices, capitals, and fragments of columns were strewn in profusion, while from the midst of them rose the walls of what appears to me to have been a synagogue. Owing, however, to a later superstructure having evidently been reared upon the original foundation, I feel somewhat diffident in pronouncing decidedly upon this point. I will, how-

ever, state my reasons for coming to this conclusion, while the accompanying sketches of the ornamentation I found here, may enable others, more competent to form an opinion than myself, to judge of their origin. The dimensions and ground-plan of the building with the columns still *in situ* closely resembled those of the small synagogue at Kefr Birim. The length was 45 feet, the breadth 33 feet. The building had an east and west orientation, and the door was in the centre of the wall on the western

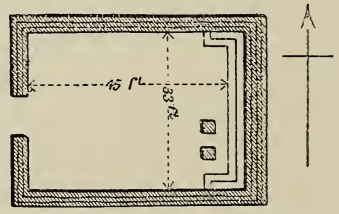


FIG. 144.

side. This does not, so far as I know, occur in the case of any synagogue hitherto found; but it was doubtless due to the necessities of the case, as the site for the building was excavated from the hill-side, the floor at the east end being about 9 feet below the surface of the earth at the back of the wall, while the slope of the hill would have made it inconvenient to place the door, as usual, on the south side. A more serious objection to this being a synagogue lies in the fact that the stones were set in mortar, which does not occur in the case of other synagogues; but

there were indications to show that these walls had been erected upon older foundations. They were now standing to a height of 8 feet. There were neither door-posts nor lintel to the entrance. The floor, which was thickly strewn with building-stones, fragments of columns, and of carved cornices and capitals, was below the level of the ground, and was reached by a descent of two steps; while opposite, running along the whole length of the eastern side, were two benches or steps, the face of the upper one being



FIG. 145.

decorated with a thin scroll of ornamental tracery, and these may have served for seats. The depressed floor and stone benches are both features which occur in the synagogue at Irbid. Upon the upper bench stood the fragments of two columns about 4 feet in height, and 1 foot 2 inches in diameter. They were evidently not *in situ*, being without pedestals, and I can only account for their being in their present position on the supposition that they had been placed there recently. Two other columns standing in the area did appear to be *in situ*, but their bases were

much hidden by the blocks of stone heaped on the floor. These blocks in size averaged 2 feet 6 inches by 18 inches. The capitals of the columns were in Corinthian style, 2 feet 3 inches in height, and were ornamented with a double row of leaves,

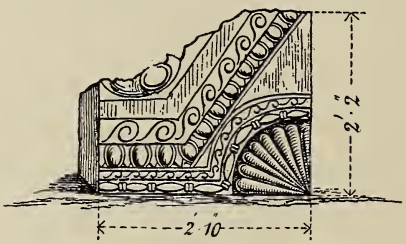


FIG. 146.

differing somewhat from the usual acanthus, and apparently of a later and more composite order. The ornamentation and character of the niches (see Figs. 145 and 146) so closely resembled that found at the

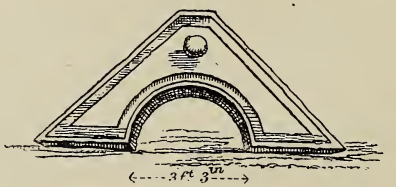


FIG. 147.

synagogue at Kerazeh and elsewhere (being of the same florid and somewhat debased type), that they seemed to me to set at rest the question of the original character of this building, though subsequently it may have been diverted to other uses. Time

did not allow me to do more than make rough drawings of the ornamentation, but I trust these will prove sufficient to enable a comparison to be made between them and other specimens found in the engravings given in the 'Memoirs.' If I am right in my conjecture, this synagogue would probably date from about the second century of the Christian era. I also found a stone which consisted of the upper portion of two small semi-detached fluted columns with Doric capitals, almost exactly

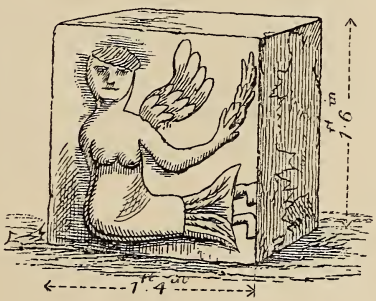


FIG. 148.

similar to the one found at Irbid. There was also a block cut into a round arch, which may have been placed over the door, like the arch on the lintel over the entrance to the great synagogue at Kefr Birim. It measured 39 inches across the base (Fig. 147). A most interesting object was a winged female figure, holding what was apparently a sheaf (Fig. 148). The ornamentation of the cornice does

not resemble any which I have found illustrated in the 'Memoirs' or elsewhere; it is not unlike the so-called egg-and-dart pattern (Fig. 149). Other specimens of

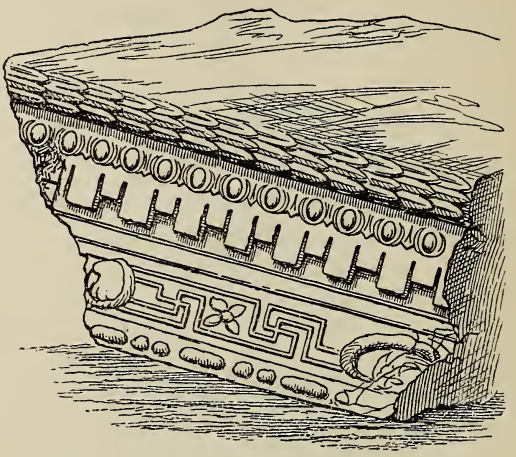


FIG. 149.

the ornamentation are seen in Fig. 150. I have not been able to form any conjecture which should

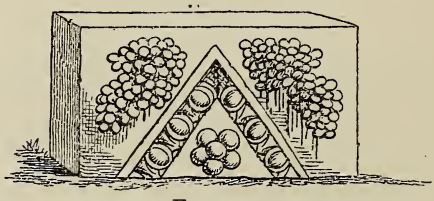


FIG. 150.

identify this most interesting spot with any Biblical or historical locality. Its modern name is Ed-Dikkih, meaning 'The platform,' a name not inappropriate

to its position. It is possible that during the next dry season the natives may continue their excavations, as stones are needed. I urgently impressed upon them the iniquity of defacing or destroying any remains that may be unearthed; but they seemed unable to perceive any good to them in carved stones, and watched my proceedings with an uneasiness and suspicion which I am afraid a gratuity failed altogether to dispel.

We now pursued an almost due easterly direction along the lower flank of the range which rose abruptly on our left, and after a mile and a half reached a spring and the remains of a small ruin called Umm el 'Ajaj. There seemed, however, to have been only two or three houses here, and finding nothing of interest we pushed on, and reached in half a mile more the ruins of El Hasaniyeh. Here again I was fortunate in coming upon remains which have been exposed to view for the first time by the natives this year.

The portion excavated was not so extensive, nor did it reveal so much that was interesting, as at Ed-Dikkih, but the area covered with ruin was greater, and it was in ancient times probably the centre of a larger population. The character of the remains now exposed to view is very difficult to determine, owing to the confusion which has been created by their belonging to two periods, the build-

ing of the later having apparently been placed diagonally on the one that preceded it. They were situated upon a terrace of solid masonry about 5 feet high, now strewn with building-stones. The upper or more recent chamber measured 20 feet across one way, but there was nothing to determine its length, no walls having been left standing; the dimension in one direction, however, could be gathered from the cement floor which still remained, a considerable portion of which was visible at a depth of 18 inches below the surface of the earth. There appeared, 18 inches below this again, a floor of solid stone, and this was evidently a portion of a building of some size, to judge from the blocks of stone which apparently were the foundations for the pedestals of columns. These consisted of five cubes of stone, each measuring 2 feet every way, and 6 feet apart. As the stone floor on which they stood was 3 feet below the surface of the ground, their upper surface was 1 foot below it, and there may therefore have been more in continuation of the line in which they stood, which the excavations of the villagers had not yet revealed. The rows ran north and south, and diagonally to the upper flooring of cement. There were some fragments of columns, pedestals, and carved cornices and capitals lying among the ruins of the vicinity, but they were much broken, and not sufficiently noteworthy to stop to sketch.

I had, unfortunately, no time to carry out my original intention of following up the Wâdy Ed Dâlieh, two miles higher, to El Yahudiyeh, where ruins are reported to exist; but I was assured by the sheikh that there were no remains such as I had seen at Ed-Dikkih and El Hasaniyeh, and we crossed the plain back to the coast where the ruins of Mes'adiyeh still remain to suggest the similarity of the name to that of Bethsaida, which may furnish an argument for its identification. Nothing definite, however, can be proved without excavation; but enough remains to show that the head of the lake must in old times have been a great centre of population, since the towns near it stood only one or two miles apart, and I have heard of more ruins in the neighbourhood, which I hope at some future time to have an opportunity of examining.

As some confusion exists in all the maps, to which I have had any access, in the nomenclature of the five wâdies which intersect the country between the Jordan and the Wâdy es Samak, I have been very particular in obtaining the names as accurately as I could from the best native sources. Of these the Wâdy Jeramâya is the most wild and inaccessible, and, except for the sportsman—it affords excellent cover for the large game which are said to abound in it—would probably not repay examination; but the same cannot be said of the other wâdies, and

especially near their heads, I have reason to believe unexplored ruins are still to be found.

Following the lake shore, we passed at the mouth of the Wâdy Shukeiyif the ruins of El 'Akib; these consist of nothing but heaps of basaltic stones. There is near here a spot marked 'ruins' in some maps, and called Dukah; they are also mentioned by more than one traveller. I found on inquiry, however, that a projecting cliff near El 'Akib was called the Dukah Kefr 'Akib, or the precipice of 'Akib, and this has doubtless given rise to the confusion. A mile and a half beyond El 'Akib we turned up the great wâdy of Es Samak. It is up this fertile valley, watered by a perennial stream, and which is in places two miles wide, and about seven miles in its greatest length, that it is proposed to carry the projected railway from Haifa to Damascus, as it affords an easy gradient from the depressed shores of Lake Tiberias to the elevated plateau of Jaulân; the rise in that distance being a little over 2,000 feet. As we ascended, I observed that only quite the lower strata are of limestone; all the rest is basaltic, and this formation is of vast thickness. The whole of Jaulân is indeed an immense volcanic field, consisting of irregular heaps of amorphous lava and disintegrated scoriæ, with mounds of globular basalt.

After ascending the wâdy for three miles we reached, a little below the margin of the plateau on

the right side, the ruins of El 'Adeseh, but it happened to be so dark at the time that I could not distinguish more than heaps of stones, and I had no opportunity of returning to it.

The country is very sparsely peopled in the district of Jaulân in which we now were, one of the largest villages being that of El 'Âl, occupying the site of an ancient ruin; but the place has been so much built over that little can be made out, though in the walls and yards of the houses are many vestiges of antiquity. In the stable of the house in which I lodged was a column *in situ* standing to a height of 6 feet, and in the yard a draped female statue, life-size, in three pieces. The feet, which as far as I could judge were on a pedestal still *in situ*, were partially covered with earth; the rest of the figure, which had been separated from them at the ankles, was lying on the ground; the head had also been separated from the body; but each of the pieces was in good preservation. The left arm clasped what appeared to be a quiver, from which I gathered that the statue may have represented the Goddess Diana. An inscription would probably be found on the pedestal settling this question, but circumstances prevented my excavating sufficiently to find out whether or not this was the case.

My objective point was now Khisfin, a village lying five miles distant in a north-easterly direction, which has played so important a part in the history of the

country that I was extremely anxious to investigate the ruins which exist there, and which have never been the subject of examination. After riding for an hour we came to the ruins of Nâb, situated on a small mound. They consist of blocks of basalt building-stone, with traces of foundations, many fragments of columns and capitals, and a tank, dry at the time of my visit, but which evidently holds water for some portion of the year; it had apparently been much deeper at a former period, only the two upper courses of masonry being now visible. It was oval in shape, and measured about 60 yards by 30. A little off the road to the right stands a large tree on a mound, which is a conspicuous object on the vast plain, and is called Ez Zeituneh, or the hill of the olive-tree. In half an hour more we reached Khisfin, which is a large village for this part of the country, the houses constructed entirely of the hewn stones which here cover a greater area than any ruins which I have hitherto visited in this neighbourhood.

The earliest notice which I have been able to obtain of Khisfin is that of Yakubi, about 900 A.D. He mentions it as one of the chief towns of 'the Province of the Jordan,' Syria being divided in his day into three provinces, viz.: the Province of Damascus, the Province of the Jordan, and the Province of Palestine. Yakut in the thirteenth century mentions it as a town of the Haurân district below

Nawa, on the Damascus road, between Nawa and the Jordan. Khisfin was doubtless at one time a fortress of the Saracens, as it is further mentioned

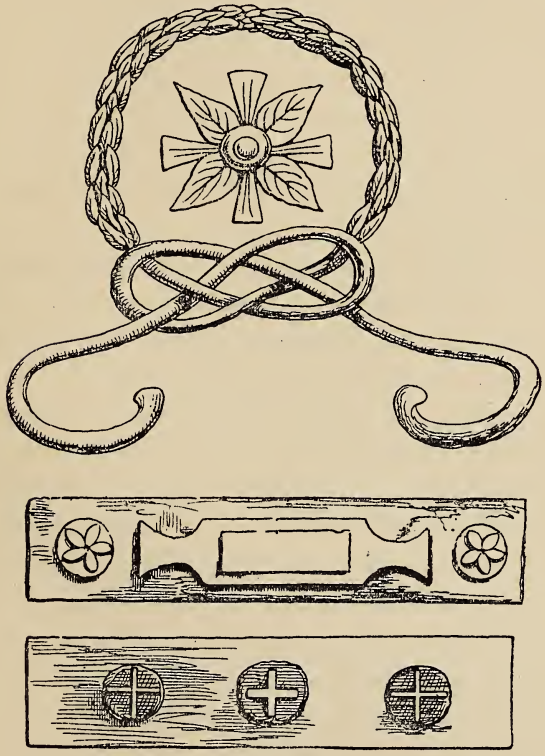


FIG. 151.

as the place to which Al Melek al 'Adil (Saladin's son and successor) fled after having been routed at the battle of Baisân by the Crusaders, who advanced

upon him from Acre. As it is mentioned as being one of the chief towns of the province so long ago as 900 A.D., it is probable that its importance dates from a much older period, as indeed was indicated by the character of some of the ornamentation which I found there. That it must also have been an important Crusading stronghold is evident from the leading characteristics of the remains, as they now appear, and of the ornamentation, of which I give specimen sketches.

The walls of the principal fort now standing measure 68 yards one way, by 54 the other. They are 9 feet in thickness, and are eight courses of stone in height, the stones being from 1 foot to 1 foot 6 inches square, but some are much larger. Within the fort are the traces of a second or inner wall forming a sort of keep in the centre, but the whole area is so encumbered with ruin that it would require more time than I was able to give to it to make accurate measurements, and a plan of the building. The village had almost the appearance of a quarry, so thickly piled were the blocks of hewn stone which enclosed the courtyards and formed the walls of the houses, while they were strewn, or stacked in heaps, over all the neighbouring fields. The lintels of the doors of the modern huts consisted frequently of large stones, some of which possibly had served the same purpose in old times, and on these were

tablets, rosettes, crosses, bosses, and other crusading devices.

I now proceeded in a westerly direction, and after two miles reached the ruins of Esfera, a mound covered with the usual hewn basaltic stones, among which are traces of foundations. Two miles farther on was the conspicuous hill of Tell el Muntar, which is also strewn with ruins of the same character; but at neither place did the remains present any marked interest: they indicated, however, the presence in ancient times of a large population in this section of country. Just to the south of Tell el Muntar we came upon a dolmen field—I counted twenty grouped in a comparatively limited area, averaging perhaps a hundred yards apart. Some were composed of three side stones with a covering slab, and in most cases these were 'free standing.' In some the superincumbent slab rested upon four uprights, and in others upon heaps consisting of large blocks of stone. In no case did I observe the covering slabs to be so large as I have seen them elsewhere, probably owing to the weight of the basalt of which they were composed; but circumstances prevented my giving these interesting monuments, upon this occasion, the attention they deserved, and I was compelled to be satisfied with having discovered their locality. In support of Captain Conder's theory, it may be interesting to note that they were situated near

water, as I shall presently show, and upon the verge of a precipitous ledge of rock which here forms the eastern cliff of one of the branches of the Wâdy es Samak, from which a magnificent view is obtained. The plateau here forms a promontory which splits the wâdy, and at its southern extremity is situated the old stronghold of the Crusaders, called the Kasr Berdâwil, or Baldwin's Castle. I saw the ruin from a distance, but was unable at the time to visit it. This I the less regretted as it has already been examined, and the small crumbling ruin which remains offers nothing of interest. On the other hand, I was impatient to reach a ruin hitherto unknown, and which was situated directly beneath the upper ledge of rocky cliff down which we were now leading our horses at no little peril to life and limb. After descending abruptly about 500 feet we came to a broad shelf, or small cultivated plateau, beyond the edge of which there was another steep descent to the bottom of the wâdy. It was upon this shelf that the ruins of Umm el Kânatir, or the 'Place of Arches,' is situated. It may have derived its name from the first object which met our view, as, turning sharp to the right under the impending cliff down which we had just scrambled, we came upon a most singular and picturesque spot. Here were two large arches, one partially ruined, but of which the abutments were still plainly visible projecting from

the rock against which it had been built, the other in a perfect state of preservation. This measured 23 feet in span, 6 feet 6 inches in depth, and 16 feet in height. The ruined one was probably of the same dimensions, but as it was mostly broken away there was no means of accurately judging of it. The arches had been built over a crystal spring, the waters of which still filled the small tank (23 feet

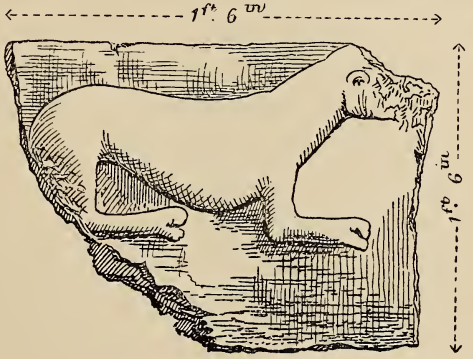


FIG. 152.

long and 6 feet wide, with a depth of 2 feet of water) under the perfect arch, and contained many small fish. It apparently escaped by an underground channel. Over the centre of the arch was a large slab of stone, upon which had been an inscription now too effaced to be legible, and as it was 16 feet overhead I had no means of examining it closely. At a slab at the side of the spring was a stone on

which was the carved figure of a lion (Fig. 152), and in front the wide-spreading arms of a magnificent old tree offered a grateful shade. At the time of year during which I visited these springs, however, it was not possible justly to appreciate its charms; a bitterly cold wind was blowing, accompanied by sleet, and I had, just before arriving at the dolmen field, undergone an experience which made the task of a minute examination of ruins or dolmens in an easterly gale of wind unpleasant in the highest degree. When allowing my mare to drink at what seemed a puddle on the plateau, she had made a step forward and plunged head-foremost down what turned out to be an overflowed well (the 'Ain Esfera), with me on her back, and we had some difficulty in extricating ourselves. The severity of the cold wind was so much intensified by my drenched condition, that, not being in very good health also at the time, I was compelled somewhat to hurry over my examination. Other ruins are situated about 50 yards from the arches, to the north, and consist of ruined walls enclosing an area of apparently nearly the same dimensions as the synagogue at Ed-Dikkih; but the foundations of the western wall were concealed by such piles of large blocks of building-stones that it was impossible to make any measurements. The southern wall was standing to a height of about 7 feet, and consisted of three courses of stone, averaging a little over 2 feet

each in height, by about 2 feet 6 inches in breadth. The door was situated 15 feet from the south-east angle of the wall, and was 4 feet 9 inches in width; the stones forming the door-post were carved in low relief with a plain moulding (Fig. 153). On enter-

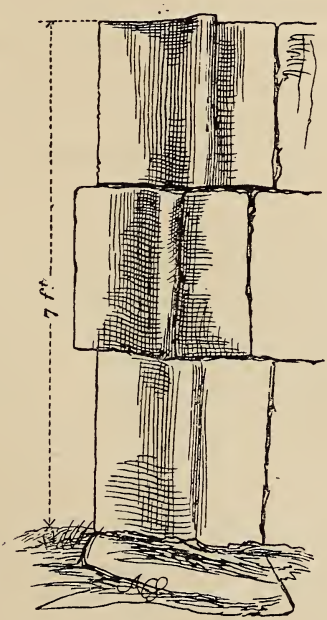


FIG. 153.

ing, the area presented a mass of stone *débris*, with columns, and pieces of carving, tossed about in the wildest confusion; six columns from 10 to 12 feet in height rose above the piles of stone in slanting positions, as though they had been partially overturned by

an earthquake; and the shaken condition of one of the stones which formed the door-post, and which projected from the others (see Fig. 153), as well as the general aspect of so much of the ruin as was still standing, confirmed my impression that the building had been destroyed by a convulsion of nature. It was difficult under the circumstances to determine the true position of the columns, or the exact plan of the building; but the character of the fragments of ornamentation which still remained, the fact that the

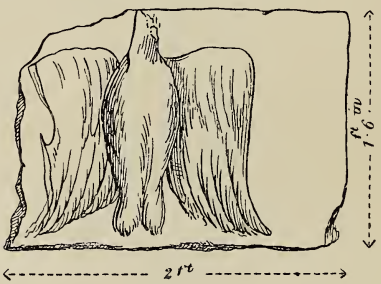


FIG. 154.

columns were all within the enclosure of the building, that the walls were without cement, together with the position of the door, and the moulding of the door-posts, all lead me to a conclusion, with respect to this building, identical with that arrived at in the case of Ed-Dikkih, namely to regard it as having been originally a synagogue. There was one stone on which was carved the representation of an eagle (Fig. 154); also a fragment of egg-and-dart

cornice, closely resembling one at Ed-Dikkih. On the ground lay a large triangular slab cut in the shape of a semicircle and highly ornamented (Fig. 155), measuring 3 feet 6 inches along the base-line, and 5 feet 8 inches between the two extremities. This I assume to have been placed over the lintel of the main entrance; and scattered about were fragments of Corinthian capitals.

It is highly probable that a careful investigation of these stones would reveal inscriptions which might

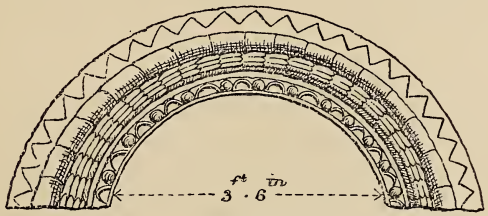


FIG. 155.

throw some light on the date of this interesting ruin. During my hurried inspection, I was in no position to make excavations, and these notes are simply a description of what I was able to observe, under circumstances by no means favourable to minute investigation. It is not impossible that I may be able again to visit this part of the country, and I then shall hope to supplement the details here given of the ruins, as well as examine others of the position of which I received information.

On my return to Tiberias, a Jew came to tell me that he knew a house which contained a stone upon which there was an inscription. I found it in the floor of a tumble-down dwelling inhabited by an old Jewish woman. As it was too begrimed with dirt to make anything of, I tempted the old woman with a bribe to let me carry it off to my lodging, promising to return it. The inscription turned out to be in Greek characters; and as it may have escaped the attention of former travellers, I have given in Fig. 156 the copy of a paper squeeze that I made of the stone.

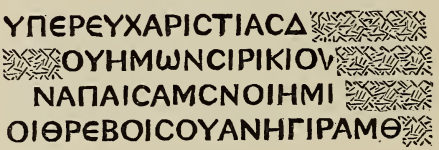


FIG. 156.

I was also taken by a Jew to look at a stone built into the back wall of the synagogue, on which was another inscription. He told me that he had seen some foreigners take a squeeze of this, and I therefore only made a rough copy in pencil, thinking it probable that it would be found in the 'Memoirs.' As, however, on returning home I found that this was not the case, I presume it must have attracted the notice of some later traveller, and hence if still

unpublished that my copy (Fig. 157) may prove of interest.

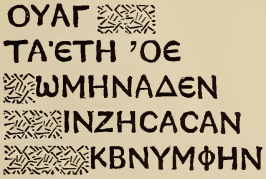


FIG. 157.

A RIDE THROUGH 'AJLÛN AND THE BELKÂ DURING THE AUTUMN OF 1884.

By Guy le Strange.

We left Nazareth on the morning of the 11th of November, making a late start, and the sun was already two hours on its course before we lost sight of the white houses of Nazareth and rode down through the ravines into the plain of Esdraelon. Pella was to have been the end of the first stage, but the sky clouding up and threatening a deluge, even before we had passed the villages of Nain and Endor, it seemed hopeless to attempt getting across the Jordan that day. Lunch was discussed on the green bank of Goliath's river, the Nahr Jâlûd, which runs into the Jordan after watering Beisân; and we then walked our horses through the ruin of the beautiful Saracenic Caravanserai, overhanging the stream, known as the Khân el Ahmar, or 'the Red.' But an hour later, while passing through the squalid village of Beisân, and casting a hurried




MAP
to illustrate the journey
of
GUY LE STRANGE
ACROSS THE JORDAN
Route indicated by.....
Beisan
Tabakat Fahl
Beit Idis
Oak Forest
Jeleidch
Irbid
Wady Yabis
Ed Deir
Bh. Ayyash
Ruins of Ostern
Mar Elias
Ain Jenna
Ajlun
Kasr er Rabad
Anjar
Kefreiny
Wady Ajlun
Dar el Leyyeh
Jerash
Remin
Nebi Hud
ed Deir
Ghazal
el Mastabah
Ain Rubia
Malka
Sarij
el Bukeia
Depressed Plain
Bh. er Ramaneh
or el Birch
Bedawin Camp
Ras Sela
Camp
Wady Kharar
Kom Tajiiz
Ruins
Hebel Sela'a
Ammân
Bh. Sar
Wady Sir
Tell Nimrin
Amik el Emir
Umm el Mudarra
From Jericho
Jisr
es Salt
RIVER JORDAN
W. Zerka
RIVER JABBOK
W. Zerka
SCALE OF MILES.
1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Longitude East 36° from Greenwich
Armitage del
Edwd Weller, lith.

glance at the imposing and widespread ruins of the ancient Scythopolis of the Decapolis, the threatened rain came in torrents, and the sky giving sure tokens of something more than a passing shower, at 4 o'clock it was determined to seek shelter and a night's lodging in the hospitable tent of an Arab whom we found camped, below, in the valley of the Jordan.

For about ten hours the rain continued with but little abatement, soaking through the hair walls, dripping from the roof of our host's abode, and further causing the sheep and goats to be disagreeably anxious to participate with us in the comparative shelter which the same afforded. However, by a couple of hours past midnight the sky was again clear, and I may add that during the remainder of the trip as far as Jerusalem, the state of the atmosphere was everything that could be desired. The late autumn in Palestine, as a season for journeying and exploration, has perhaps some advantages over the spring, if only the traveller be sufficiently fortunate to happen on the six weeks or two months which generally intervene between the early autumn showers and the steady rains of winter. These last do not, as a rule, begin much before Christmas. In the autumn, the land, parched by the summer heats, is of course less green and beautiful than in the early days of spring; but, on

the other hand, ruins are no longer concealed by over-luxuriant vegetation, and since the coolness of the weather renders a shortened hâlt at noon a matter of no inconvenience, the traveller can devote to the business on hand all the hours of daylight, which even at this season can be counted upon as lasting from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Bedawin are of course early risers, and we, their guests, had in consequence no difficulty in getting early into the saddle, so that before the sun had made its appearance above the mountains of 'Ajlûn we were riding eastwards over the fertile lands of the Ghôr, the Arab name for the mighty 'cleft' through which the waters of the Jordan pour. At the present day the country all round Beisân, though partially cultivated, and fetching a certain price in the market, is not to compare for productiveness with the description that has been left to us of its fertility in the century preceding the arrival of the Crusaders. Mokaddasi,* writing about the year 1000 A.D., describes Beisân at his time as being rich in palm-trees, and informs us that all the rice used in the provinces of the Jordan, and of Palestine, was grown here. At the present day no rice is cultivated anywhere in this neighbourhood, nor, as far as I know, in any other part of Palestine, and the palm has long disappeared from here, as also from the

* Edited in Arabic by M. J. de Goeje (Leyden, 1877), p. 162.

shores of the Sea of Tiberias, where, according to the geographer above quoted, in his days 'all around the lake were villages and date-palms, and on the same sail-boats coming and going continually.'*

That the bygone prosperity might easily return to this country, should circumstances (*i.e.*, the Government) again become propitious, was an idea that impressed itself on us, each moment the more, while riding over the rich soil, and fording at every hundred yards the streams which here intersect the Ghôr. An abrupt descent brought us in the course of an hour to the Jordan, at a ford where the water scarcely reached the bellies of our horses, and we had the luck to be guided to the right place by three of our hosts of the previous evening, who, mounted on their wiry, bald-tailed mares, and armed with the long Arab lance, had turned out to accompany us during the first few hours of the way. Across the Jordan in a hollow was an encampment of black tents, tenanted by kinsmen of our host of last night, and here we were condemned to waste a precious hour while coffee was prepared and ceremoniously drunk, followed by a light repast of bread and sour milk; hence it was past nine before the

* *Op. cit.*, p. 161. A few stunted palms are, however, still to be seen at Kefr Argib and elsewhere on the shores of the lake (see J. Macgregor, 'Rob Roy on the Jordan,' 1869, pp. 325, 329; also, 'Recovery of Jerusalem,' p. 367, in Captain Wilson's article on the Sea of Galilee).

ruins of Pella were reached, although these lie but an hour distant from the spot at which we had forded the river. As Mr. Selah Merrill very justly observes in the work which, unless I am misinformed, is, as yet, the sole fruit of the American Palestine Exploration Society, 'Tabakât Fahl is a beautiful location for a city, and the wonder is that it should have been forsaken.' Even after the long summer drought, the springs gushing out among the broken columns and ruins of former splendour are abundant enough to make fertile all the neighbouring land, which, situated on the upper level of the Ghôr, and 250 feet below the sea, enjoys, perhaps, the finest climate, from an agricultural point of view, that can be found in Syria.

That the Arab name of Tabakât Fahl, 'the Fahl Terraces,' represents the ancient Greek Pella there can be little doubt. Dr. Robinson, who was the first to make this identification,* is no mean authority; and further, Mr. Merrill, after meeting the various objections which may be urged against this present site, clinches the argument by bringing together a mass of evidence in favour of this being the ancient Pella of the Decapolis, giving citations from the works of Josephus, Eusebius, Stephanus of Byzantium, and others, who treat of the early topography

* 'Biblical Researches,' 1852, p. 322.

of Palestine.* It may be of some interest to add that though the site, to all appearance, was centuries ago abandoned by the Arabs, it is renowned in the early Moslem chronicles as the field of the great 'Battle of Fahl,' which, six centuries after Christ, sealed the fate of Byzantine rule in Syria.† According to the annalist Tabari, this celebrated victory was gained in the year 13 A.H.,‡ and the geographer Yakut states that the Greeks left 80,000 dead on the field.

In the first decades of the Christian era, Pliny, describing Pella, notes its abundant water-supply, and in the Talmud this city is mentioned under the name of Hamtha (or hot baths) of Fahal.§ At the present day, however, the springs, though abundant, apparently are not thermal. We found them icy cold, and perfectly sweet, and on this point it may be added that the Arab geographers never note them in their enumeration of the numerous Hammâms of the Jordan Valley. Neglecting the Greek name Pella, the Arabs, according to their wont, revived the older Semitic Fahal, which they pronounced Fahil or Fihl. It is of interest here to

* 'East of the Jordan,' by S. Merrill (London, 1881), pp. 442-447.

† G. Weil., 'Gesch. der Chalifen,' i. 40 *et seq.*

‡ Ed. Kosegarten, ii. 158.

§ Tal. of Jerus. 'Shebiith,' vi. 1. See Neubauer, 'Geogr. du Talmud,' p. 274.

note that Yakut, in his 'Geographical Encyclopædia,'* after stating the correct pronunciation of the name to be 'Fihl,' continues, 'I believe this name to be of foreign origin, since I do not recognise in it the form of any Arab word.' And that this Pella was the place which witnessed the Moslem victory over the Greek forces, is placed beyond a doubt by the further statement that 'the battle of Fihl, which took place within the year of the capitulation of Damascus, is likewise known under the appellation of the Day of Beisân,'† and from Beisân, on the right bank of the Jordan, we had ridden in a couple of hours.

Pella, or Fihl, must have fallen into ruin very shortly after the Moslem conquest, as is proved by the absence of all Saracenic remains among those of the Byzantine epoch which cover the ground in all the neighbourhood of the springs. A like fate also befell most of the great Greek cities over Jordan, as, for example, Gerasa (Jerâsh) and Philadelphia (Ammân), where we find little that is Moslem among much that recalls the Christian times. A few generations later, after the third century of the Hejra, the very name of Fihl ceases to be mentioned in the itineraries and town lists of the Arab geographers, and neither

* 'Mo'jam-al-Buldân' (Leipzig), iii. 853.

† Quoted also by the author of the 'Marâsid-el-Ittilâ' (ed. Juynboll, ii. 336), whose work is a critical abridgment of Yakut's Encyclopædia.

Istakhri, Ibn Haukal, nor Mokaddasi (himself a Syrian) take any notice of the place; although, in A.H. 278, one of the earliest of their geographers, Yakubi, considered it a place of importance, for in his summary of the cities of the military province of the Jordan (*Jund al Urdunn*), after describing such towns as Acre and Tyre, he mentions* together Tibnîn, Fihl, and Jerâsh, adding that 'the population inhabiting these towns is of a mixed character, part Arab, part Foreign' (*al 'ajam*), by which last term, if I am not mistaken, we are to understand the native Greek-speaking Christians who had not been displaced by the immigrant Arabs. Fihl, or Tabakât Fahl, as the place is now called, having thus been left undisturbed for nigh a thousand years, would doubtless yield a rich archæological harvest to anyone who could spend some days among the ruins, and carefully examine the very large number of broken cornices and other carved stones which lie about on every hand. Considerable remains of buildings also, that were once adorned with columns, surround the spot where the springs gush out from the hillside.

Although the Jordan Valley is elsewhere parched after the summer droughts, the Fihl Gorge was a mass of waving green reeds, reaching higher than a horseman's head, and almost completely masking

* 'Kitâb-al-Buldân,' ed. Juynboll, p. 115.

from view the ruined edifices which lay partially submerged in the running water. Near what must have been a bath—judging from the large piscina—stood a fine monolith in white marble, above 8 feet in height; and among the reeds, a score of yards further down, and nearer the north bank, were two columns, rising, each of them, over a dozen feet out of the pool in which they stood. But nowhere did we notice inscriptions. The great centre of population would seem to have been upon the hillside overhanging the right or northern bank of the stream. Here there are traces of a large necropolis with innumerable sarcophagi lying about on every hand. In most cases these last have been smashed by iconoclastic treasure-seekers, but some few remained almost intact, displaying the Christian emblems beautifully carved in the white stone. One in particular was noticeable from its great artistic merit. The lid of the sarcophagus was still perfect, adorned with three wreaths chiselled in high relief, and between them, in monogram, the  , and the *A.ω.* but with no further inscription. Traces of buildings and half-buried columns lie in profusion to the south of the necropolis, on the slope overhanging the green gorge where the stream gushes out, while, doubtless, the precipitous hill which shuts in the left

or southern bank of the wâdy would repay a more detailed examination than any which has as yet been bestowed upon it. Digging would naturally be most desirable here, but much that is interesting might easily be brought to light by anyone who would come armed with a crowbar, and give himself the trouble of turning over the drums and the cornices which, to all appearances, have lain in their present position since the days of the Arab invasion; and greatly do I regret that, in our hurried visit, I had not the tools with me nor the leisure-time that was required for a detailed examination of this little-visited ruin.

The road from Fahl to 'Ajlûn runs along the steep north bank of the Wâdy Fahl, going east-north-east up into the plateau overhanging the eastern limits of the Jordan Valley. For the first mile the wâdy is narrow and precipitous, and the road, a mere path, winds among cliffs, a hundred feet above the dry torrent-bed; but after passing a curious gap, where two giant boulders, on projecting spurs, have the appearance of watch-towers, the gorge widens and bifurcates, the road taking the branch gulley leading east-south-east. Since Mr. Merrill has laid such stress on his discovery, in these parts, of the Roman road running between Pella and Gerasa,* referred to by Eusebius, and which the American archæologist

* *Op. cit.*, 357, 445.

regards as a final proof that Fahl *is* Pella, I was naturally on the look-out for traces of the same in the Wâdy Fahl. It is a disappointment for me to have to confess that though evident remains of a paved causeway are found in several places on the uplands above, yet here in the wâdy itself no traces could be discovered of cuttings in the cliff-side. I therefore conclude that the road must have approached Fahl (Pella) down some other gulley.

Three-quarters of an hour after leaving Fahl we had reached the upland rolling-plain, intersected in every direction by shallow ravines, and dotted with scrub oak. Before us, in a south-easterly direction, rose the mountains of Gilead; to the right, less than a mile away, and due south, was the village of Kefr Abîl; while on the left, at a distance of a mile and a half, on a low spur, appeared Beit 'Adîs. Skirting the heads of three small wâdies which lead down to the Jordan Valley, our road took a southerly direction for a couple of miles over the barren upland, after which suddenly the path plunged down off this upland into the precipitous gorge, which is an upper arm of the Wâdy Yâbis. On the height, with a path running up to it from the gorge, lies the village of Kefr Abîl above mentioned, and before leaving the upland plateau, on the very brink of the wâdy, our road passed through remains of former habitations, rendered the more noticeable by several large square tanks,

cut in the living rock, and measuring, roughly, 10 feet long by 8 wide. These were now filled up with mould so as to be flush with the surface, and must have been constructed to serve as vats for oil or wine. The workmanship was assuredly ancient, and such as to do honour to the skill and perseverance of the stone-cutters of Palestine. The wâdy down which the road passed, turned off upwards into the hills in a north-easterly direction, while towards its outlet it ran for more than a mile due south, with many smaller wâdies coming into it from the east. In this upper part both the main wâdy and its tributaries were, at this season, completely dry, but the banks showed clear traces of the rush of spring freshets. The road was down in the bed of the wâdy, and we followed it for about a mile before turning to the left into a green valley leading up in a south-easterly direction, where nestled the village of Jedeidah surrounded by olive-trees and gardens. The natural beauties of this dell, the distant clatter of the two mills which were churning the waters of the brawling stream, the well-tilled fields, and the succulent grass that covered the slopes on every hand, invested Jedeidah with all the attributes of a rural paradise; and it being now past midday, we proceeded to recruit exhausted nature with certain of the contents of our saddle-bags, while the nags lunched, even more sumptuously than we, on the fresh grass of the brook-side.

This I judge to be the main stream of the Wâdy Yâbis, although not so marked on the maps of this district, which are all remarkably deficient and inexact. A villager whom I questioned was ambiguous in his account; but I gathered from him that, after passing Jedeidah, the stream makes a bend at right angles, going about a mile down the wâdy due south, then turns west again, and forcing its way through the mountains, comes out into the Jordan Valley at the spot where the name Wâdy Yâbis is marked on the maps. Much of this we noted while following the path which led away in the opposite direction, for scrambling up the high spur overhanging the left bank of the stream, we proceeded nearly due east into the mountains, along the ridge which forms the southern boundary of the little valley where we had made the noontide halt. The wâdies here begin to be dotted with scrub oak, through which, after riding for a short hour, we came into the olive-groves surrounding the hamlet of Urjân. There is collected in this village a population apparently too numerous for the accommodation provided by its houses. More than half of the inhabitants have turned the caves, which honeycomb the rocks, into habitations, and thus manage to provide themselves with all the comforts of a home in the bowels of the earth. For the most part these caverns would seem to be of artificial construction, having squared windows and doors, with

properly situated smoke-holes; very awkward, however, are these for riders, and into them several times it was difficult for me to prevent my horse from precipitating himself. These tenements would doubtless prove worthy of investigation by anyone who, more fortunate than myself, should have leisure to overcome the inhospitable shyness of their present occupants, and have the good fortune to gain admittance to these Troglodyte harems.

Beyond Urjân may be said to begin the forest of 'Ajlûn. At first the hill-slopes, and further on both the torrent-beds and the ridges, become clothed with oak-trees, averaging 30 to 40 feet high. In the spring-time, doubtless, the ground would be covered with grass and weeds; but now, in the late autumn, nothing was to be seen under the trees but bare rocks: still, from the thickness of the forest and the low sweep of the branches, a horseman ten yards ahead was generally completely hidden from view. For a mile beyond Urjân the road keeps along the southern slope of the valley under the trees, leading steadily upward and crossing the entrances of many smaller dells, till finally it turns up one of these latter in a direction south-west-by-south, and round the upper end gains the summit of the ridge, whence a lovely view is obtained through the oak openings back over the Jordan Valley towards the Dead Sea. A little further on along the ridge, and about three-

quarters of an hour after leaving Urjân, we passed a large circular hole in the ground, some 6 feet across, opening down into an immense cistern, now partly choked with rubbish, but of which the bottom was still 20 feet from the surface of the ground. It appeared to be bottle-shaped within, as are most of the cisterns in Palestine. In a southerly direction not far from its mouth, under the trees, were traces of ruined walls, but I was unable to obtain from the guide any information as to the name by which the place was, or had formerly been, known.

Our road still lay along the ridge in a south-easterly direction, with the broad wâdy on the left hand, down which, and behind us, lay Urjân, while on the right we were continually passing charming glades where the oaks ever and again give place to bay-trees, and betwixt their branches a rider obtains picturesque glimpses over the well-wooded hills to the south-west. It was up one of these glades, or rather forming the background of an upland plain closed in on either hand by dark green mountain-slopes, that we first caught sight of the Castle of Rabad, crowning a hill-top about three miles away, bearing south-south-west. From this point, which is rather more than an hour distant from Urjân, a direct road, said to be very stony, leads to the Kasr er Rabad straight up this plain. It was, however, now past three o'clock; and the days being

short, we decided to push straight on to the town of 'Ajlûn, our night-quarters, and put off visiting the castle till the morrow. We therefore turned up the hillside to the south-east, and on the brow first caught sight of the town far below us, at the junction of three valleys, embowered in gardens, its minaret and walls already gilded by the rays of the setting sun. An hour's scramble, first round the shoulder of the hill and then over into the valley which comes down on 'Ajlûn from the north, brought us to our destination; and for the last two miles the road lay through a succession of vineyards among the rocks, where the vines, whose leaves the autumn had turned to ruddy gold, stood clear out against the darker shade of ancient olive-trees. The distance we had travelled perhaps lent a false enchantment to the view; but whether or not this be the cause, 'Ajlûn has a place in my memory as one of the most beautiful and fertile regions that I visited in Palestine, bearing comparison even with those far-famed villages which are watered by the rivers of Damascus. The little town is situated at the junction of three valleys, one coming from the north, down which had been our road; another coming from the west, blocked a couple of miles distant by the spur, crowned with the Castle of Rabad; while opposite is the valley leading up almost due east on the road to Sûf and Jerâsh. The place contains a mosque

with a tall square minaret, of fine workmanship built of yellow stone; and this last recalls so strikingly some 'campanile' in the plains of Lombardy, that I am inclined to suppose we have here the relics of a Christian church, dating perhaps from Crusading times. The town has an abundant supply of water from a spring which gushes out, not far from the mosque, under an archway of ancient masonry, which rises among ruins of columns and cornices. Modern 'Ajlûn is, however, but an unpicturesque collection of mud hovels, where the homestead generally consists of an agglomeration of windowless cabins, surrounding a dung-heap.

In one of these cabins, having accomplished, by a bribe, the ejection of the host's family, we proceeded to take up our night's quarters, and made an excellent dinner off the mutton and rice that had been originally prepared for his own household. It then became a burning question to my two companions whether the hospitality, which they in turn were forced to offer to the fleas, would allow of their enjoying the solace of undisturbed repose. For myself, I was happy in being above such considerations. For, during a late trip across the Haurân, sundry insects pervading the guest-chambers of my Arab hosts, having kept me for three successive nights without closing an eye, and further observing myself under these circumstances to be rendered incapable of

archæological research through physical exhaustion brought on by ceaseless scratching, I had, this journey, brought in my wallet a small string-hammock. Now the den in which we were quartered had, like most Arab cabins, square ventilation-holes, left under the rafters on either side below the ceiling. Through two of these holes, from without, I found I could manage to push the straight stems of a couple of long logs of firewood, in such a manner that the ends protruded very appropriately within, like pegs standing out from the opposite walls of the room; while the logs were jammed and prevented from being drawn completely through the holes, by the gnarled and branched portion that remained without. Having thus got my pegs inside the room, I proceeded to sling the hammock from them, about a yard and a half above my friends and the fleas, and enjoyed thereby undisturbed repose during the night, having first been duly admired by the whole population of the village, who, during a couple of hours, were admitted in rotation to rejoice their eyes at the unaccustomed sight of a Frank tucked up in a hammock.

The next morning, the 13th of November, we were up betimes, and after a thimbleful of coffee rode up, going almost due west, to the Kul'at er Rabad, and reached it in a few minutes over the half-hour. From the Arab geographers quoted on a

previous page, I have been unable to obtain any information as to the early history of this splendid fortress.* Raised on foundations that would appear to date from Roman days, its bastions and walls bear silent witness to the energy and skill of the Crusading Knights who, during their two-century tenure of the Holy Land, erected this stronghold beyond the Jordan to hold the country of Moab and Ammon in awe. The view from its battlements is grand beyond the power of pen to describe. Looking west, the long valley of the Jordan, from the Lake of Gennesareth to the Dead Sea, lay spread out at our feet, with the winding river-course

* Kul'at or Kasr er Rabad may be rendered 'Castle of the Suburb.' I find no mention of the place in the works of Yakubi, Ibn Haukal, Istakhri, Mokaddasi, or Yakut, neither does the name occur in Ibn-el-Athîr's voluminous chronicle. The place is not noticed among the Crusading Castles of Palestine by G. Rey in his 'Monuments de l'Architecture Militaire des Croisés en Syrie.' Burckhardt, who visited 'Ajlûn during his travels, and found the fort occupied by a garrison, writes ('Travels in Syria,' pp. 266, 267) that he saw Arabic inscriptions (presumably on the slab in the wall, the one that I was unable to reach) which proclaimed that the castle was built by Saladin. Also in Abu-l-Feda's Geography, a work of the fourteenth century of our era, it is stated (p. 245 of the Arabic Text) that the Castle of 'Ajlûn was built by 'Izz-ed-Dîn Osâmah, one of Saladin's famous captains. An examination of the building, however, its style of architecture and its general plan, would lead me to doubt the purely Saracenic origin of this magnificent fortress; and I feel sure that portions at least of the building must date from an age long anterior to the time of Saladin or the First Crusade.

glittering among the green brushwood, its surface already gilded by the beams of the rising sun. Beyond and for a background were the mountains of Samaria, while on either hand lay the well-clothed hills of 'Ajlûn, now bronzed by the late autumn, and giving back a sheen of almost metallic lustre under the level rays of sunlight that were pouring over them. Eastward at our feet rose up the town of 'Ajlûn, nestling at the bifurcation of the valleys, in its gardens and vineyards; and beyond, some three miles off, white in a green garland, was 'Ain Jannâ, a village on the road to Jerâsh. The castle itself crowns a knoll, and is surrounded by a deep moat, dug out of the rock. Its vaults and halls are certainly some of the finest existing in Palestine, the masonry equalling that to be seen at 'Athlît, on the sea-coast above Cæsarea, which is always quoted as one of the most remarkable of Crusading ruins. Kusr-er-Rabad amply deserves a more extended examination than any that has as yet been accorded to it. As I have noted above, the foundations of the building would appear to date from Roman days, for on many of the stones used in the lower walls eagles are carved, in low relief, which seemed to me of earlier workmanship than the tenth century. On the left of the gate-house high up in the wall is a tablet bearing an Arab inscription, which I was unable to come near enough to read.

As my readers will easily believe, round and about these old walls, thus perched on the mountain-top as a landmark to all the Jordan Valley, and concerning the men who first constructed its dungeons and wells and dark passages, there was an amount of mystery that it would have been most fascinating to have made some attempt at penetrating, had the time permitted of a detailed exploration. But that night we were bound to sleep at, or beyond, Jerâsh, and therefore, after but a hurried visit, we most reluctantly left behind us Kasr-er-Rabad, and returning through the town of 'Ajlûn, rode on up the valley eastwards, towards 'Ain Jannâ.

On the right bank of the bed of the brook up which lay our path, and five minutes after leaving the last houses of 'Ajlûn, is a low cavern, used by the natives as a stable for their cattle. As far as we could see, it contained neither inscriptions nor sculptures ; and though originally, doubtless, natural, it had been artificially enlarged for the convenience of the beasts, being in most places upwards of 6 feet in height, and running deep into the hillside for a distance that we estimated at somewhat less than 50 yards, thus affording a large area under cover, that was at the present moment much encumbered with all sorts of refuse. The distance of about a mile and a half which separates 'Ajlûn from 'Ain Jannâ is almost entirely planted with olive-trees,

from which the fruit had now (November) lately been shaken; and in the market-place of the latter village we passed three huge caldrons filled with crushed berries, set in a little water to simmer over a slow fire, this being one of the methods of extracting the oil. Beyond 'Ain Jannâ the road still continues straight up the valley almost due east, and, on the northern hill-slope about half a mile from the village, passes beside a couple of rock-cut tombs in the cliff overhanging the bed of the stream, the second of the two still containing a broken sarcophagus which is without ornamentation. A short distance beyond these we came on the source of the brook, where it wells up from a hole under a rock in the middle of the valley. The stream runs down from here through 'Ain Jannâ, and even at this season suffices to water all the lands between it and 'Ajlûn. Above this, although no water was visible, oak-groves of considerable extent lay on every hand, and the path, after traversing a rocky glen where the branches of the trees almost met above our heads, came to a more open space where, at a couple of miles above 'Ain Jannâ, the road to Irbid and Sûf bifurcates. Of these two we followed the latter, bearing slightly towards the right and in a southerly direction, through park-like glades, and in half an hour reached the saddle which forms the watershed between the valleys of 'Ajlûn and Sûf. At this point a fine view was

obtained over the way before us, running through the broad valley winding down towards Jerâsh in a direction a little south of east. The ground about here was dotted with oak-trees and scrub, but the growth became smaller and the clumps more sparse the farther we left 'Ajlûn behind, till at last, near Sûf, about three miles from the saddle, the trees had disappeared almost entirely. Before reaching this village, the valley narrows to a gorge shut in by white chalk cliffs, and the track, after climbing among those which overhang the ravine to the south, leads suddenly down on the squalid cabins of the hamlet.

The Sheikh of Sûf has so evil a reputation among travellers both for cupidity and insolence that, it being yet an hour to luncheon, we decided on hurrying on without paying him a visit; but that we did not make some acquaintance with the people of this village was subsequently a cause of regret to me, when I heard that they held in their hands many coins and antiquities, these being brought to them for sale by the Circassians who are colonizing Jerâsh. There were, in particular, rumours of a pot, said to have been dug up in this neighbourhood, and reported to have contained countless gold coins of large size, which same had not all, as yet, been delivered over into the hands of the officials of the Ottoman Government, to whom all treasure-trove

is lawfully due. The finding of hoards is by no means a rare occurrence in Palestine, where the people have at all times been their own bankers, and have ever preferred confiding their hard-earned gains back to the bosom of Mother Earth, rather than entrust them, for safe keeping, to friends in whom they could place no trust, knowing well that they themselves, in the like position, would, without a question, deem it imbecile to be fettered by any shackles of honesty or honour.

The road from Sûf to Jerâsh has been so well described in guide-books as to need no detailed notice here. For the most part the path follows the hill-slopes on the southern side of the broad shallow wâdy which runs down in an easterly direction till it joins that of Jerâsh, which is a valley coming in from the south. Shortly after leaving Sûf, far down to the left of the road and on the northern hill-slope, a ruin was pointed out to us by our guide which time did not permit of our visiting; but as he assured us that it was the remains of some ancient edifice, it may perhaps repay the examination of some future traveller with leisure at command. Even before reaching Sûf, as noticed above, the aspect of the country had changed. The thick oak-forest, which is so characteristic of the 'Ajlûn hills, had been replaced by single stunted trees, pines, and scrub oaks, dotted sparsely over the hill-

sides; beyond Sûf, the slopes became almost bare, and in all the country to the east and south of Jerâsh the land is for the most part treeless, and only an occasional pollarded oak cuts the sky-line of the hill-top.

Riding across the hills from Sûf, Jerâsh becomes visible from the village of Deir-el-Leyyeh, a couple of miles from the ancient city, which is seen spread out below, in a broad valley, running north and south. From this upper point, where at a hole in the rock there is a spring, all down the road lie fragments of sarcophagi and carved stones, showing how extensive must have been the suburbs and necropolis of the Roman city. The ruins of Jerâsh, or Gerasa, have been too often described to require more than a passing notice in these pages. At the time of our visit the Circassians had possession of the place, but had fortunately taken up their abode on the left bank of the stream, where the ruins are comparatively insignificant; and as yet they had not begun to interfere with the magnificent theatres, colonnades, and temples crowding the right bank, and which are, Palmyra perhaps excepted, the most extensive and marvellous remains of the Græco-Roman rule in Syria. The prosperity of the town, despite its fine situation and plentiful water-supply, diminished considerably after the expulsion of the Byzantines. The locality is mentioned by Yakûbi,

a couple of centuries after the Moslem conquest, as being in his time one of the towns of the Jordan province; and the poet Al Mutanabbi, who flourished at the Court of Baghdad, and wrote panegyrics, devotes some lines to the praise of the fertility of the Crown domains at Jerâsh. Yakût, in the thirteenth century, A.D., who had not himself visited the spot, writes that it is described to him as 'a great city, now a ruin, . . . through which runs a stream used for turning many mills. It lies among hills that are covered with villages and hamlets, and the district is known under the name of the Jerâsh Mountain.'* But except for incidental notices, if I mistake not, the city is rarely mentioned by the subsequent Arab geographers and historians. Whatever may have been the original cause of its depopulation, it is very remarkable how little the ruins of Jerâsh up to the present day have been disturbed. Fortunately there never was any great Moslem city in its neighbourhood, hence its columns remain *in situ*, or, thrown down by the earthquake, lie along the ground; while the stones of the great Temple of the Sun and of the theatres have nowhere been pilfered for building material. Further, since in these regions there is no sand to drift over and veil the outlines, and the frequent drought preventing the ruins from becoming masked by vegetation, all that

* *Op. cit.*, ii. 61.

remains stands out, white and glaring, in noontide, presenting that same appearance of recent desolation which is so striking a characteristic of the freshly cleared streets of Pompeii.

After lunching on the bank of the stream, among the gigantic oleanders that, still in November, were covered with delicate pink flowers, we passed the afternoon riding about, and examining the ancient city, but combined archæological investigations with the keeping of a good look-out against prowling Circassians, and at sundown proceeded out of the southern gate, past the circus, now a meadow, and through the fine Triumphal Arch at the town limit. Here, turning to the left, we crossed the stream at the mills, and began to climb the conical hill on which stands the Moslem village and sanctuary of Neby Hûd, where it was determined to claim for ourselves hospitality, and safe night-quarters for our horses, against the thievish propensities of the Christian Circassians.

The view from this high point is extremely fine, and embraces all the valley and ruins of Jerâsh looking north. While the guest-room was being swept out, the elders came round and discoursed on their grievances, against the Government in general, and their new Circassian neighbours in particular. These last are a thorn to the Moslems in their agricultural operations, and further debar them

from seeking for treasure among the vaults and cisterns of Jerâsh, a city built, as one of the sheikhs was good enough to inform me, by his own ancestors, the 'Adites, of the Days of Ignorance. After supper till near midnight had we to listen to and discuss politics with these worthy people, among whom the arrival of a traveller is a rare accident; and we three being Christians and they Moslems, points of religion were often incidentally touched upon, to the exceeding happiness of our Arab guide, who was a red-hot Protestant and polemic. Despite religious differences, however, we remained excellent friends, and ultimately all slept together in the guest-chamber, the party consisting of our three selves, the sheikhs, and the children. During the night an occasional dog chased goats over our prostrate forms, and the fleas hopped about merrily, which, combined, prevented our oversleeping. Hence, by half-past six next morning (November 14th), we had saddled our horses, and, breakfastless, were off for 'Ammân, to which place it had been determined to proceed by the direct road across country, without going first south-west to Salt and thence back south-east to Ammân, the route generally followed by the caravans. This direct road is hilly, and numberless valleys have to be crossed which, from the east, intersect the table-land lying between Jerâsh and

Ammân: it is but little used, and, as far as I could learn, has been seldom described by previous travellers. To us, its being little known was of course a recommendation; besides, as we had no wish to excite the attention of the officials of the Belkâ, it was perhaps as well to avoid visiting Salt, the residence of the Governor of that province.

Starting from Neby Hûd in a south-easterly direction, after half an hour we crossed at right angles the Wâdy Riyâshî, running south-west, and down which lies the direct road to Salt. At the point where we forded the brook is a ruined mill almost hidden among the mass of oleanders and fig-trees bordering the bed of the stream, which, it is said, joins the Jerâsh river a short distance before this latter itself falls into the Zerkâ. We, however, turning towards the south, left the Riyâshî behind us, and, making our way up the hill-slopes above its left bank, here most refreshingly dotted with scrub oak, in rather more than half an hour had gained the summit of the watershed which divides the valley of Jerâsh from that of the Zerkâ. The saddle across which the road lay commanded a fine view on either hand, the summit being marked by a cairn of stones a dozen feet high, erected to mark the spot where a celebrated chief had been slain. From here to the right, westwards, there was visible the lower part of the Valley of Jerâsh, separated from us by several

ranges of bare hills. To the left, and in front towards the south, lay the hills of the Belkâ, cut off from us by a deep gorge, at the bottom of which, as yet unseen, ran the Zerkâ, the Biblical Jabbok, in ancient times the boundary between the territories of Og, the King of Bashan, and of Sihon, King of the Amorites, and still to-day the limit to the north of the Belkâ province. The hills all round were barren and stony; here and there a pollarded oak struggled for existence against the drought and the loss of its branches, which the Bedawin had cut off for fuel, and everything seemed lifeless and forlorn, until suddenly, as we were making our way down a steep spur to the bed of the Zerkâ, we came on an encampment of three black tents, hidden away in a delicious little dell, down which went brawling a tiny stream. The Bedawin men were all away with the flocks, but the women received us hospitably, started coffee-making, and the while were profuse in advice and directions as to the road we were to follow. They belonged, they said, to the Khaza 'Ali, a branch of the Beni Hasan, one of the great tribes of the Belkâ, and seemed in comfortable circumstances. Very pretty striped carpets of goat-hair were spread for us to sit on in the shade of the tent walls, and though our hostess was more remarkable for her perpetual chatter than for graces of person, she seemed extremely proud of the rings which adorned both

thumb and little finger of her right hand and the two big toes of her feet. What between conversation, coffee-making, and the setting before us of bread and milk, it was fully an hour before we could tear ourselves away from our gossiping hostess, but at last we set off again up the hill-spur, and then began once more zigzagging downwards. A final scramble brought us into a small amphitheatre debouching on to the river, the slopes of which were covered with the curious shrub called by the Arabs *Yenbût*, its long fleshy green twigs or leaves, of the thickness of crochet-needles, brushing against our faces as we pushed our way through the jungle.

The bed of the *Z*erkâ river, at this season only some three yards broad, and barely a foot deep, is bordered with the *Daflah*, or oleander, still showing an occasional pink flower among its dark green leaves. The sides of the gorge in which the river runs are here extremely steep, in places almost perpendicular; and while further to the west, down the river, the valley appears to open out, up eastward the mountains on either hand closed in more and more, till in the extreme distance the stream makes its way out of a gigantic cleft where high precipices would seem almost to meet a thousand feet above the water. At the spot where we now crossed, the Wâdy *Z*erkâ has a level pebbly bottom above 200 yards across, which during the freshets must be almost entirely sub-

merged. Riding straight across this we proceeded to pick out a torrent-bed among the many that cut through the cliffs overhanging the river on the south, and after half an hour's climb up a very steep wâdy we were again on the high uplands, whence, looking back over the gorge, we could trace our route among the hills of Jerâsh. Continuing on through a broad upland valley dotted with trees, there appeared before long a small village of mud cabins—among which was a blacksmith's shop in full blast—clustering together under the shade of a grove of oaks, many of them of no inconsiderable size. The place is called 'Alûk, and is situated about two miles distant from the *Z*erkâ, due south of the spot at which we came across the river. From 'Alûk the road towards 'Ammân first runs due east for a couple of miles over the upland, crossing every now and again the head of some wâdy running down towards the left into the gorge of the *Z*erkâ; and finally, bearing round towards the south, goes over the hill-shoulder, from which, back over the gorge and the hills, the white dome of Neby Hûd can be made out in the far distance. The country over which we were now travelling may be described as a rolling upland; it is cultivated in patches by the Bedawin, and in places is overgrown by brushwood, scrub oak, and *Yenbût*. Among these hollows and hills we frequently lost our way, and wandered about till set on the right path by

chancing to stumble on some small camp of black tents, occupied by the women who were herding the camels in the absence of their lords.

Several times in this part of the country we passed 'Arab circles' of small boulder stones, and on one occasion, under a fine Butm tree (terebinth), came on what was evidently the tomb of a much-respected sheikh, judging from the corn-measures and the plough which had been deposited within the circle of the shrine for safe keeping. About four miles from Alûk, and roughly to the south-east of it, topping a low hill over which goes the road, are the ruins of a building that was originally constructed of squared stones, but of which nothing is now traceable except the general rectangular plan. The place is known by the name of Sarrûj, and is used by the people as a storing-place for grain. Some Arabs who were here, occupied in cleaning corn, invited us to go on to a large encampment of their tribe, the Beni Hasan, which they pointed out in a hollow a mile further off. Here the black tents, fifteen in number, and of the largest size, were pitched in two lines facing east. On stopping to inquire and give the news, we were requested by the sheikh to administer relief to an unfortunate Arab who lay at the back of the tent suffering from failing breath, in what appeared the last stage of consumption, a disease that is said to be of no uncommon occurrence among the Bedawin.

The case, however, as far as we could judge, was beyond the reach of medicine, and there was no physician among us, so with expressions of sympathy, and a few general directions as to the patient's comfort, we took leave and continued our way up and over a hill to the south-east, from whence was overlooked a broad shallow valley, not unlike that in which is situated Jerâsh. This valley, the drainage of which is towards the north, runs up at a very slight gradient in a direction almost due south, for over six miles. It is called by the Bedawin of the Beni Hasan, Wâdy Khallâ, or Khallî, and affords good pasture to their herds, which find water at several shallow wells in its bed. The sheep and goats here met with are of a remarkably fine breed, large in size, and have heavy fleeces. The bell-wether of each flock is distinguished by a sort of crown of gaudily coloured feathers attached to the back of the neck just behind the ears, the wool in its neighbourhood being also dyed red with *Henna*. As we proceeded up this valley, which is everywhere dotted with oak-trees and thorn, there appeared a ruin on the right hand, high up the slope of the hills shutting in the valley from the west, where by our glasses we could perceive, as we thought, the remains of walls. It is known by the names of Khurbet-er-Rumanèh and Khurbet-el-Bireh, but being much pressed for time it was found impossible to visit the spot, which,

further, our guide assured us at the present day contained but little more than a heap of stones. A short distance beyond, where we lost sight of the ruin, the valley takes a sharp turn to the right, and then back into a south-westerly direction; which following, we soon after turned up into a branch wâdy coming in from the west, and were much pleased to see the main encampment of the Beni Hasan, it being already two hours after midday. Here twenty-four long black tents, pitched in double row, took up the whole of the floor of the wâdy; and to that of the sheikh, conspicuous by its superior size, we proceeded, picking our way over the tent-ropes, and there made ourselves the recipients of Bedawin hospitality.

First came the customary thimbleful of coffee—roasted, pounded, and boiled up in our presence; then followed a more substantial repast of excellent new Arab bread—resembling thick pancakes—which was seasoned by being dipped bit by bit in a bowl of melted butter; then coffee once more, and in an hour we were on our road again, having given our hosts the latest items of political news, and received from them in return minute directions as to the path. Turning back into the main wâdy, the track runs up it some little way, and then going south-west crosses a low shoulder. From this point there is one road leading almost due west, up a wâdy,

to Salt direct, while that towards Ammân keeps on in a south-westerly direction over the rolling country, and cuts across many minor wâdies that run down from the east. Near the point of bifurcation of these two roads is a small clump of Butm or terebinth trees, at the foot of which are lying the shafts of two broken columns. The larger of them is a monolith some 9 feet long, and is cut out of the piece in such a manner that the base, 4 feet high and about 2 feet in diameter, tapers down to the shaft of half this size, the whole being very neatly executed in white limestone. A mile further on again, where the road runs along the western slope of a shallow valley, we passed fragments of six more broken columns of about the same size as the others; but since no further trace of any temple or building was to be seen in the neighbourhood, one is led to the supposition that these fragments have at some period been transported hither from the great centre of ruins at Yajûz. We were now travelling along a raised causeway, the remains of a Roman road, running over the undulating plain, which is covered here and there by patches of corn-land, and after a couple of miles our horses began to stumble among stones of Yajûz; but as the sun had already gone down, archæology was out of the question, and it was necessary to discover, without further delay, the whereabouts of the Bedawin camp in which we trusted to

pass the night. Turning, therefore, off the road at right angles towards the west, we rode up to a goat-herd, who directed us to a slight depression in the plain, where, after twenty minutes' riding, we came suddenly on about a dozen tents of the Beni 'Adwân, and without unnecessary ceremony pressed ourselves on the hospitality of the somewhat surly sheikh. The night was bitterly cold, and—what between the wind and the fleas, and the extremely confiding nature of the ewes, who, for warmth's sake, were always trying to insinuate themselves beneath our blankets—sleep was fitful. Further, and as usual, till far into the night, our Arab friends discussed in strident tones politics and finance, for, as every traveller knows to his cost, these worthies have such a habit of sleeping at odd hours during the day, that at night, being wakeful, they are sadly addicted to interminable discoursings. Discomfort only ceased with the dawn-chill, and, being up betimes, when the sun rose in splendour over the rolling uplands, here in most parts covered with the growth of a plant resembling heather, we were already on our way back to the road into Yajûz, out of which we had turned the night before.

At the entrance of the ruins is a large clump of some of the finest terebinth-trees that ever I came across. In their immediate neighbourhood is a large Arab cemetery, the most prominent tomb of which is that

of Nimr ibn Gobelân, a sheikh of the 'Adwân, whose death, according to the inscription on the headstone, took place A.H. 1238, *i.e.*, some sixty and odd years ago. His memory is still held in awe among the Bedawin, and we noticed many ploughs and other farm implements lying near the tomb, deposited here in sanctuary. One of the 'Adwân, our host of the previous night, who accompanied us a short distance on the journey, informed me that this spot is known under the name of A'deyl, and is considered distinct from Yajûz. The ruins, known to the Arabs under the latter name, have been so fully described in their respective works by both Mr. Oliphant and Dr. Merrill* that further details may be deemed superfluous. They extend from A'deyl eastwards for more than a mile. It is noteworthy, however, that all attempts at identification seem to have failed, although the extensive remains of carved Byzantine capitals, squared blocks, and the foundations of numerous edifices which crowd both sides of this broad upland valley, would lead us to conclude that there must have existed here a very populous town during the Græco-Roman period. It may be worth noting that in the lists of the Arab geographers there is no mention of the name Yajûz; nor was there in the days of the Caliphate, so far as I can

* 'Land of Gilead,' p. 227 *et seq.* 'East of the Jordan,' p. 273 *et seq.*

discover, any considerable town that agrees in point of situation with the site of these ruins. The caves with which the hill-slopes are honeycombed are used by the 'Adwân as granaries, but apparently no settled inhabitants are found in the neighbourhood.

After spending some time in riding in every direction over these interesting remains, and seeking in vain for anything in the way of an inscription or a date, we proceeded in a south-easterly direction, still over a rolling country that showed ever and anon patches of cultivation. The shallow wâdies which the track crosses for the most part run down towards the east, presumably into the depressed plain of El Bukei'a; but, for some miles round, the whole district hereabout is known under the name of Yajûz. Half an hour after leaving the ruins we passed a large nameless heap of disjointed but squared masonry, lying in the shade of some Butm trees growing on a hill-slope facing the north. From here the path, turning up the wâdy towards the east, crosses some low hills, and finally surmounting the crest, leads down into a curiously long and narrow plain: apparently the bed of an ancient lake, as I should judge, analogous to that which once filled the depressed plain of El Bukei'a, lying some miles over to the north-west of our present point. Wending down the slopes, which, just before reaching the level, showed successive lines of pebbly beach and water-

worn banks, we descended to the ancient lake-bottom, here some 400 yards broad, and as even as a billiard-table. The Arabs of the 'Adwân call this track of land Hemel Belka, and cultivate the rich alluvial soil in patches, raising crops of wheat and maize (*durrah*). The narrow plain, from the point we entered it, extends for the distance of about a couple of miles due south, having an average breadth that might be estimated at a quarter of a mile, and then bears off in a south-easterly direction, draining down in all probability into the Zerkâ Valley, which, according to the maps, must curve round towards it. Where the angle occurred we came up out of the narrow plain, and striking over the hills to the south-south-west passed another nameless ruin, where confused heaps of masonry are crowned by a few small, but most elegant, oval arches; which passed, once again we found ourselves on the upland plain that trends down south towards 'Ammân.

The land here, after the early rains, was undergoing the process of being ploughed and sown by the Fellahîn of the Beni 'Adwân. At one moment we could count about thirty yoke of oxen, and the wonted stillness was agreeably enlivened by the shouts of the ploughmen, who, in more than one case, were engaged in directing the capricious evolutions of camels which had been compelled to take the place of the more docile steers. Considering the ungainly

size of the camels and the diminutive wooden ploughs to which they were so clumsily harnessed, it was assuredly a marvel of skill that the furrows ran in passably straight and parallel lines. The camels evidently loathed the business, and to judge by the objurgations of their drivers—who were continually calling heaven to witness that their (the camels') clumsiness was the natural consequence of a dissolute life and a disreputable ancestry—the camel-men themselves were not enamoured of their job. For a considerable time we passed patch after patch being ploughed in this fashion, and riding over a treeless plateau at length struck back into the high-road running south-east from Yajûz to 'Ammân, which we had left to our right in turning off to visit the ruins and the Hemel Belka. After this, very shortly came a rather steep wâdy in a cross direction, running due east, down which the path led; and in a few minutes more we found ourselves for the second time in the Valley of the Zerkâ, and the ruins of 'Ammân were before us.

The ruins being fully described in all the guide-books, it would be waste of time attempting in these notes to recall the wonders of Greek architecture that have hitherto lain peacefully entombed beyond the Jordan, but which are now given over by the Ottoman Government to be a habitation for Circassian colonists. At the house of one of these

worthies, while being hospitably entertained with tea and new bread, I endeavoured, but in vain, to gain some information concerning the whereabouts of the curious subterranean city of Rahab that Mr. Oliphant, in 'The Land of Gilead,' reports having heard spoken of as existing in the country to the east of the Zerkâ. All we could learn was that some people had heard tell in stories of this place, but no one at 'Ammân had seen the spot or knew of its exact position. As confirming these somewhat vague notices, it may be, perhaps, worth while to draw attention to the account which Mokaddasi, in the beginning of the eleventh century A.D., gives of a remarkable cavern in these parts. After describing 'Ammân, where he notes 'the Castle of Goliath on a hill overlooking the city, and also the tomb of Uriyyâ (Uriah?) over which stands a mosque,'* he continues: 'About a farsakh (three miles) distant from 'Ammân, on the border of the desert, is the village of ar-Rakîm.† Here is a

* Mokaddasi, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

† It is often stated that ar-Rakîm may be identified with Petra or Wâdy Musa, on the hypothesis that the name represents the 'Arekem' of Josephus ('Antiq.,' iv. 4, 7, and iv. 7, 1.) This identification, however, which originated with A. Schultens in the last century (see his 'Vita Saladini,' Index geographicus, s. v. *Errakimum*), and has been copied by many later writers (*e.g.*, Note 2 to p. 5 of vol. ii., part 2, of S. Guyard's translation of Abu-l-Feda's Geography) was shown, very rightly, to be incorrect by Robinson ('Researches,' ii., p. 653). In the first place, ar-Rakîm of Mokaddasi, three miles from 'Ammân, and said by Abu-l-Feda to be in the Belkâ Province, cannot be Petra, which

cave with two gates, one small, one big ; and they say that he who enters by the larger gate is unable to pass out by the smaller. On the floor of the cavern are three tombs, concerning which Abul Fadl Muhammed ibn Mansur has related to me the following, on the authority of Abu Bekr ibn,' etc. ; and after giving his chain of authorities, which reaches back to 'Abd Allah, the son of the Khalif Omar, he reports how the Prophet had said that these were the tombs of certain pious men, who, seeking shelter from the rain, had entered this cave and been shut in by the fall of a rock which completely blocked up the entrance. The impediment, however, was miraculously removed by the hand of the Most High, on their calling to Heaven for aid, each man in turn conjuring the Almighty, and resting his claim on the virtue of some especially pious act performed in past times. The legend here is not to the purpose, and is besides too long to quote *in extenso*, it being merely another version of the story of the Seven

lies two days' journey *south* of the Dead Sea. And this agrees perfectly with the mention of it in Ibn al Athîr's Chronicle (Text ed. by Tornberg, vol. xi., p. 259), where the place is set down as lying two days' march north of Karak, on the road between Damascus and that fortress. So, again, in Abu-l-Feda's Chronicle, 'Events of the Year 568 A.H.' The confusion no doubt arises from the fact that originally there were two Rakîms, as is shown by the notices in the Talmud, namely (cf. Neubauer's 'Geographie du Talmud'), Rekem of Ga'aya and Rekem of Hagra.

Sleepers of Ephesus, whose adventures form the subject of a portion of the eighteenth chapter of the Koran; but as confirming the reported existence of some large cavern or underground city in the neighbourhood of 'Ammân, the account is curious, and it shows at how early a date such a report had obtained currency.

From 'Ammân it was our intention to get across to Jerusalem, *viâ* 'Arâk el Emir; but since the route is already carefully laid down in the invaluable Baedeker, but little detail of distances and directions need here be given. Riding up the bank along the now diminutive stream of the Zerkâ, we passed an abundant spring that forms one of its sources, and climbing the northern side of the wâdy gained the treeless upland plain stretching westward. Over this, a ride of two hours brought us to the cleft of the Wâdy Sîr, a well-wooded ravine that drains into the Jordan Valley, and in which, but still some miles lower down, are the remains known as 'Arâk el Emir. At the spot where we left the bare upland plain to plunge into the green wâdy, the ruins known as Khurbet Sâr lie a short distance to the left, while across on the opposite side there were visible the mouths of several small caverns or chambers hollowed in the face of the cliff; and we noticed other specimens of these abodes of bygone anchorites in many places further down the gorge. Half-way

down the steep path that leads into the dell there opens out a small plain, at present occupied by some Circassian families, who have built here a village of wattle-and-dab houses, exactly similar to those that are met with in the neighbourhood of Tiflis. But we had to hurry on without visiting them, for the afternoon was waning.

The whole gorge of the Sîr is most beautifully wooded; two mills are turned by the stream that flows through it, and while its sides are almost everywhere hidden by the dark foliage of the oaks and other forest trees, the margin of the brook too is masked by a broad fringe of oleanders that grow here to a height of over 14 feet. In a little meadow, where the cliff on the right bank recedes from the water's edge, and about two miles above 'Arak el Emir, there is a collection of Arab 'circles' of a somewhat abnormal type. The stones are about a foot high, and form the perimeter of a circle that is roughly a couple of yards across. What is unusual, however, is that here the area surrounded by this low circular wall has been roofed over by laying branches rafter-wise, and filling in with straw, the whole being afterwards covered with a coating of clay. There was, as usual, a sort of doorway left in the circle of stones, in the present instance facing south. These little buildings have every appearance of being intended for habitations of some sort, only

that while the extreme lowness of the roof and the small extent of the covered space would render the ingress of any human being an impossibility, the clean condition of the interiors showed that they had evidently not been used as pens for lambs or other small quadrupeds. Further, our Arab guide immediately recognised them as marking the burial-places of sheikhs, reminding us of the very similar, though unroofed, circles which we had passed by in the hills on many previous occasions during our journey.

After riding down the Wâdy Sîr for nearly two hours, the path lying sometimes in the very bed of the pebbly brook, sometimes along the meadows which skirted its banks, and at times again threading the copses that overhung its winding course, we came out suddenly into the magnificent amphitheatre of hill-cliffs, where is situated 'Arak el Emir—said to be the remains of the palace which, according to Josephus, Hyrcanus built in 182 B.C., during the last days of his exile beyond the Jordan. In the main the description of the Jewish historian tallies well enough with what we find here of rock-cut caverns, and cyclopean masonry carved with the forms of huge animals. It is, however, perhaps a point worth noting, and one that did not fail to strike me when I first came on the ruins of the Kasr-el-'Abd, that while Josephus plainly states that

Hyrcanus 'built it entirely of *white* stone to the very roof, and had animals of a prodigious magnitude engraved thereupon,' when we come to examine here the carved blocks, alongside of which the inquisitive traveller feels dwarfed to the dimensions of an insect, we find that they are all, without exception, cut out of stone most remarkably *black*. But as Josephus had himself never visited this place, the error is probably due to his having been misinformed by the hearsay report of contemporary tourists. The remains at 'Arâk el Emir, whatever may be their date, cannot fail to strike the traveller with somewhat of that same feeling of awe which he experiences when standing for the first time beside the huge stones either at Baalbek, the platform of Persepolis, or the Egyptian Pyramids. Greek and Roman ruins are dwarfed into insignificance beside these, for they tell of an age when labour and time were held as of no account in the calculations of kings who built for themselves such temples, palaces, or tombs. It was with difficulty that we tore ourselves away from these wonderful relics of a bygone civilization. But already the sun was hiding behind the western hill, and while we were lingering in the artificial caverns high up in the cliff, they became shrouded in gloom, though the bold characters of the Hasmonean inscription on the rock above—read 'Adniah,' and said to mean 'Delight'—still stood out distinct in the

blush that was already dying off the surface of the black masonry in the meadow below.

We had yet to beat up night-quarters, and therefore, scampering up the shoulder of the projecting spur shutting in the amphitheatre on the south, we crossed into a wâdy known as that of Umm el Madâris, and shortly coming across some homeward-bound cattle, were directed by the neat-herd to the encampment of his tribe, the Beni 'Abbâd, located in an adjacent dell. We were now among the wâdies that lead down directly to the Jordan Valley, and just before coming to the tents, while riding over the crest of an intervening spur, suddenly there burst on us a most magnificent view of the Dead Sea, spread out apparently at our feet. From the height, its whole surface, as far as the eye could reach, appeared like a sheet of burnished gold about to become molten under the rays of the setting sun, whose orb was fast vanishing behind the blue hills of the desert of Judæa; and below, in the foreground, was the opening out of the Jordan Valley, here some ten miles across—Jericho, as a patch of black-green foliage, shining out distinct on the further side.

Although the Beni 'Abbâd were hospitable, and their carpets were tolerably free from vermin, the coldness of the air, and the continuous groaning of one of the men who had lately received a spear-

thrust in his leg, rendered our sleep fitful. Besides, as usual, our hosts took up the best part of the night detailing their grievances to us, and requested our advice on the important point of how £100 might be obtained on loan to rid them of their enemies. It appeared that certain lands belonging from time immemorial to their tribe, for which, moreover, they held title-deeds, had been (by Government) granted to, and were occupied by, the immigrant Circassians. We suggested that a petition forwarded with the title-deeds to the Government would doubtless set matters right; but in reply we were assured that so doing, unless much bakhshîsh went with the papers, would only lead to the loss of the deeds without there being the smallest chance of the tribe obtaining any re-establishment in their rights. Cheaper than this, they said, it would be to bribe the Circassians to decamp and take up their quarters on somebody else's land, and for this purpose a hundred pounds were needed, which we, however, deeply regretted being, perforce, unable to put them in the way of obtaining.

Next morning we were up before the sun, for there was the long ride into Jerusalem before us. Distances in the East, even after long practice, are most deceptive, especially when looking from a height down and across a plain. The Jordan seemed almost at our feet, but it was four hours' good riding

before we reached the ford and crossed the swirling muddy stream, which, even at this season, in some places rose above the horses' girths.

When leaving the mountains and riding between the last hill-spurs out into the Ghôr, I judge we must have passed within a short distance of Tell esh Shâghûr, which recent writers propose to identify with Segor, or Zoar, one of the Cities of the Plain. Dr. Merrill, who discusses the question of the site at some length,* concludes by stating that to his mind the arguments for placing the Zoar of Lot at the north end of the Dead Sea are convincing; adding, 'We present here a few quotations from Arab writers which bear upon this question.' But from these 'quotations' I venture to think he deduces an erroneous conclusion, through not bearing in mind the fact that the narrow valley leading *south* from the Dead Sea towards the Gulf of Akabah was known to the Arabs as the Ghôr, and hence bears the same name as is given by them to the Jordan Valley running up *north* from that lake.

Whatever may be concluded from the Biblical narrative as to the position of the Zoar of Lot, a careful examination of the Arab geographers leads me to conclude that they, at least, held to the tradition preserved by Josephus, and followed by Eusebius and Jerome, which places Zoar or Segor to the south-

* 'East of the Jordan,' p. 233 *et seq.*

east of the Dead Sea. Their *Z*oar is identical with the city so frequently mentioned under the name of Segor by the historians of the Crusades, and occurring in many of the itineraries of the mediæval travellers. To the Arab geographers *Z*ughar, the city of Lot, was as well known a place as Jerusalem or Damascus; and the Dead Sea, more generally called al Buhairah al Muntinah, 'the Stinking Lake,' has also the alternative name of 'the Sea of *Z*ughar.' Further, it is evident that there were not known to these mediæval geographers *two* *Z*ughars, for in Yakut's 'Mushtarik,' a lexicon of geographical homonyms, which especially deals with cities of the same name, but of different location, the name *Z*ughar does not figure in the list. Turning now to Mokaddasi, who was himself a native of Palestine, and wrote during the century preceding the first Crusade, we find that *Z*ughar (also spelt Sughar) is mentioned as being in his day the capital of the province of the Sharâh* (which corresponds in general with the ancient Moab), and he cites it as the sole remaining city of Lot, 'saved by reason that its inhabitants knew not of the abominations.' As to its position, it is described as standing on (or near) the Dead Sea, with the mountains near about it;† while that it is to be sought at the south-eastern end of the lake is shown

* Mokaddasi, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

† *Op. cit.*, p. 178.

by the statement that it is 'one marhalah' (twenty-five miles—a day's march) distant from Maâb, a town situated in the desert to the east of Kerak; and 'four marhalahs' from Wailah,* the port at the head of the Gulf of Akabah. Also Istakhri† and Ibn Haukal,‡ geographers of the generation preceding Mokaddasi, state that between Jericho and Zughar lay 'a day's march;' and in one case other MSS. give the alternative but probably erroneous reading, 'two days' march.' At this epoch, that is, during the eleventh century A.D., Zughar was a place of considerable trade, famed for its indigo and dates, these last being of exquisite quality, and quoted as one among the eight kinds celebrated in all the countries of Islam.§ On the other hand, the climate of Zughar was deadly, and its drinking-water execrable, 'hot even as though it were over hell fire;'‖ and later, when characterizing the drinking-water of Palestine as generally so excellent, Mokaddasi exclaims,¶ 'But we take refuge in Allah from that of Zughar, though the water of Bait-er-Râm is in truth bad enough.'

Turning now to the great Geographical Dictionary of Yakut (compiled in the early part of the thirteenth century A.D.) we find two long articles, one

* *Op. cit.*, pp. 192, 249.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 126.
‖ *Op. cit.*, p. 178.
† Edit. de Goeje, p. 66.
§ Mokaddasi, p. 470.
¶ *Op. cit.*, p. 184.

under the heading 'Sughar,' and another under the alternative pronunciation of 'Zughar.'* After quoting the verse of a poet who sings of the 'southern region of the Sharâh from Maâb to Zughar,' Yakut proceeds to give various traditions which connect the town with the history of Lot, and says that its name came to it from one of Lot's daughters. It also is stated that Zughar is situated in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, in a wâdy; it being three days' journey from Jerusalem, and lying near the frontiers of the Hejâz;† and the author of the 'Meracid,' writing about a century after Yakut, after quoting his words as to the position of Zughar, which is on or near the Dead Sea, adds that it is not far from Kerak.‡

Thus I find no authority, among such of the Arab geographers as I have read, for locating the Zughar or Zoar of their day anywhere but to the south-east of the Dead Sea. For, to sum up their indications, the city stood 'near the Dead Sea'; 'one day's march from Maâb,' 'the same from Jericho,' and 'four from the head of the Gulf of Akabah'; 'three days' march from Jerusalem,' and 'near Kerak'—from all of which it would appear impossible that a town across the

* Wustenfeld's 'Yakût,' ii. 933; iii. 396. In the Arab geographers the name is found spelt صغر, Sughar; زغر, Zughar; and سقر Sukar.

† *Op. cit.*, ii. 934.

‡ 'Meracid-el-Ittilâ,' i. 514.

Jordan opposite Jericho should be intended ; while the assertion that the water at Sughar was execrable, of itself indicates that Tell esh Shâghûr, in the wâdy below 'Arâk el Emir, where excellent springs abound, can hardly be a satisfactory identification.

From the Jordan ford up to Jerusalem we rode along the beaten track that every Cook's tourist has followed. The ghastly barrenness of the country, and the glare from the chalky hills among which the road winds, renders this one of the most tedious bits of journeying in Palestine, and we were fortunate in being able to accomplish the ride from Jericho to Jerusalem in five hours. It is, however, worth while to come up this dreary road from the east to catch the first sight of Jerusalem from the summit of the Mount of Olives. Arriving by the Jaffa road, the Holy City is hidden until the pilgrim is almost within its gates, while from Bethany he rides suddenly into view of this unique metropolis, which, from here, in its entirety, lies spread out at his feet. The week's discomfort in Bedawin tents, and the monotonous ride of the last few hours, had, I think, attuned us to a just pitch of appreciation, and although rather too hungry and weary for æsthetic raptures, it was some little time before we rode on down through St. Stephen's Gate, and sought out our night-quarters in the Damascus Hotel.

In concluding these notes, and for the information

of those who may have any intention of penetrating into the countries beyond the Jordan, I may be permitted to bring to the notice of my readers that our journey had been accomplished without paying a piastre to Goblân, the famous (or rather infamous) chief of the 'Adwân, or even in any way gratifying the cupidity of the Sheikh of Sûf—both personages generally but too well known to those who have left Jerusalem for a trip into the Land of Gilead. And yet we had been able, in the course of six days, to visit the sites of Tabakat Fahl (Pella), Jerâsh, 'Ammân, and 'Arâk el Emir, taking the direct route across country from one site to another, and along roads seldom seen by the ordinary tourist. The secret of our successful raid—for so only can I venture to call it—lay in the fact that, taking neither tents nor servants, we were but three horsemen mounted on inelegant hacks, more useful as roadsters than in any way remarkable for breed, and that one of us was a native of the country, personally acquainted with the Arab sheikhs of the district which it was intended to visit. Lastly, as we took no more baggage than our horses could carry, we, in accordance with that ancient and convenient custom of the Arabs, imposed ourselves nightly as guests in some nomad camp, coming down at the hair-tent of the sheikh, whose honour, forthwith, was engaged for our personal well-being and safety. By this

proceeding we avoided the necessity of carrying with us provisions for the road, and dispensed with a baggage animal; and hence our appearance was in no way calculated to excite the cupidity of those whom we met in our journey.

The presence of tents and baggage-mules, with the attendant dragoman and *Z*aptîeh, are plentiful reasons to account for the costliness complained of by travellers who cross the Jordan and go eastward from the Dead Sea. Anyone who is lucky enough to get a native friend for companion, who can keep his own counsel, and who wants no escort of *Z*aptîehs, can almost always visit any part of the country beyond the Jordan at very little risk. Only his stay must be so little protracted that the authorities get no news of it, and for this short time the traveller must be content with Bedawin fare, and such repose as may be obtained on the hard earth under an Arab tent, where hospitality is provided alike for vermin and for men.

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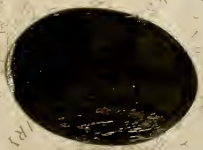
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